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# OLD DIARY LEAVES

THE ONLY AUTHENTIC HISTORY OF
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Third Series, 1883—87
(2nd Edition)

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BY
HENRY STEEL OLCOTT
PRESIDENT-FOUNDER OF THE SOCIETY

"It takes two to speak truth—one to speak and another to hear."—*Thoreau.*

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1929

THE FOUNDERS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

# OLD DIARY LEAVES

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**Third Series, 1883—87**

*(2nd Edition)*

BY

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# INTRODUCTION

THE first volume of these historical sketches covered the period from the meeting of Madame Blavatsky and myself, in 1874, to our departure from New York for Bombay in December, 1878; the second tells of our adventures in India and Ceylon, the formation of Branches, the giving of lectures, healings of the sick by hundreds, occult phenomena produced by H.P.B., etc., and brings us down to the autumn of 1883: at this time we take up the thread of narrative, and go forward to the month of May, 1887. I think the reader will agree with me that the subject-matter of this volume possesses absorbing interest, quite equal to that in its two preceding volumes, if not even greater. Accounts are given among other things of my meetings with several of the "Masters" in the course of my travels, and of the results of the same, of our removal of the Society's Headquarters from Bombay to Madras, of H.P.B.'s last departure from her beloved Indian home into the exile of an European residence. The troublous times of the Coulomb conspiracy are dealt with in this volume, and the true story of the S.P.R. Report is placed on record, so that each member of our world-wide organisation may be

in a position to refute the slanders which, even at this date, echo in some quarters round the name of Mme. Blavatsky. The building and formal installation of the Adyar Library, with ceremonies of an unprecedented character conducted by Indian pandits, Buddhist monks, Parsi mobeds, and a Muslim maulvi, are described, and numberless details of the growth of the Theosophical movement, and of our Society in particular, are given. The story takes us to Europe as well as through Eastern lands, the intelligent reader being afforded the chance of watching the gradual outworking of the plan of the unseen Founders, whom their visible agents know to be at work through this channel in spreading throughout the world a knowledge of the principles which were taught by the Ancient Sages, and the general understanding and adoption of which would cure most of the evils which now afflict mankind. For men suffer because of ignorance of themselves and their environment, and the false ideals of happiness which they struggle for are begotten by their ignorance—by nothing else. The war of individual men, of classes, and of nations can never—will never—cease until the ideal of the Perfect Man, the omnipotence of His perfected Will, and the irresistible force of the law of Karma are grasped by the public mind, and the present popular ignorance is dispelled.

## CONTENTS

*Frontispiece*: The Founders of the Theosophical Society


| CHAP. | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| | Introduction | v |
| I. | Official Recognition | 1 |
| II. | An Adept Seen at Pondicherry | 14 |
| III. | The Master K.H. at Lahore | 26 |
| IV. | Reception by the Maharajah of Kashmir | 39 |
| V. | Mysterious Disappearance of Damodar | 51 |
| VI. | "Coming Events Cast Their Shadows Before" | 66 |
| VII. | Phenomena and Healing at Nice | 79 |
| VIII. | A Struggle in the London Lodge, T.S. | 90 |
| IX. | H.P.B. and the S.P.R. Report | 99 |
| X. | Successful Issue of Buddhist Mission | 112 |
| XI. | Reality of Thought-Transference | 139 |
| XII. | The Painting of Adept Portraits | 151 |
| XIII. | German Experiences | 164 |
| XIV. | The Coulomb Missionary Conspiracy | 179 |
| XV. | First Visit to Burma | 199 |
| XVI. | H.P.B. Leaves for Europe | 217 |
| XVII. | Concerning Sibyls | 235 |
| XVIII. | Final Departure of Damodar | 253 |

| CHAP. | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| XIX. | In Northern India Again . . . | 269 |
| XX. | Progress of Theosophy in India . | 284 |
| XXI. | Phenomenal Memories of Pandits . | 299 |
| XXII. | H.P.B. in Exile . . . . . | 311 |
| XXIII. | Tender of Resignation . . . | 322 |
| XXIV. | Cremation Ceremony in Ceylon . | 336 |
| XXV. | Establishing a Buddhist Flag . . | 351 |
| XXVI. | Founding the Adyar Library . . | 373 |
| XXVII. | The Opening Ceremony . . . | 383 |
| XXVIII. | More Touring in Ceylon and Western India . . . . . | 400 |
| XXIX. | Thugs—The Prince of Wales in Danger . . . . . | 414 |
| XXX. | H.P.B. Founds "Lucifer" . . . | 427 |
| | Index . . . . . | 441 |


*Publishers' Note.*—The original edition of OLD DIARY LEAVES, 3rd Series, contained, besides the frontispiece, two illustrations of T. S. Convention groups of 1882 and 1884. As it is not possible to reproduce these satisfactorily, they are not included in this edition.

## CHAPTER I

## OFFICIAL RECOGNITION

IF there was ever a man who could turn a *menu* into a sort of alimentary poem, it is Brigadier-General A. Kenny-Herbert, ex-Military Secretary to the Government of Madras, now retired and living in London. He possesses so perfect a genius for cooking, that I believe he could develop the latent potentialities of a potato or parsnip so as to force one to realise what must have been the food of the Olympian gods. In fact, I should not be surprised to learn that he had been at least a *sous chef* in the Jovian kitchen, and along with his colleagues Soyer and Brillat Savarin, had reincarnated to teach our generation how to prepare digestible dishes. It is a passion with him, as it was with Alexandre Dumas, and I very much fear that—if 'tis truly said that the ruling passion shows strong at death—he would refuse to die until he had had time to give his final orders for the preparation of the "funeral bak'd meats".

General—then only Lieut.-Colonel—Kenny-Herbert invited H.P.B. and myself to his house one day to a tiffin which, in compliment to us, he made an entirely vegetarian repast. After so many years I vainly try to recall the courses, but I have the most vivid recollection of the fact that we and the three other

guests declared it to be superlatively appetising. The service matched the food, giving one the impression that this was not a feast of Gargantua, but a Lucullan banquet, over the preparation of which an exquisitely refined taste had presided. Most of our Western vegetarian cookery, on the other hand, has given me the impression that it was but the serving up of chicken feed in a style the reverse of attractive to a refined nature. If vegetarians could but get this pseudonymic "Wyvern" to teach them how to do it, their cause would win fifty converts where it now does one. They have proved unmistakably that vegetable food is as nutritious and healthier than meat diet, they need go no farther; but their cause can never be won until their cooks learn how to make one's mouth water at sight of their dishes.

Whether it was the food, or the sweet hospitableness of our hosts, or the semi-malicious banter of Mr. Forster Webster, Mr. Reed, and Capt. Agnew, A.D.C., or the bright sunshine and flowers in the garden, or what not, Madame Blavatsky bubbled over with high spirits and kept the company in continual merriment. Anon, a jest would be followed by an occult teaching, and that by the making of "spirit raps" on the table or silvery bell-tinkling in the air; and this party, like every other in which she had been present, broke up with the impression left on the guests that she was one of the most brilliant and entertaining, if eccentric, personages they had ever encountered. At Ooty, as at Allahabad and Simla, persons of the most influential position were disposed to be friendly to her and to the Society, some of the

most impressible ready to submit themselves wholly to her charm. Here, as elsewhere, she spoilt her chances of full success by some sudden caprice of conduct, some passionate revolt against conventional narrow-mindedness, the uttering of strong language, or the indulgence of biting witticisms about some high-placed person. While eminently fitted to shine in the world, and having had many years of intimacy with it through her high birth, she had passed out of the "sphere of its influence," and brought away with her a feeling of disgust for social shams and of contempt for moral cowards. She railed at society, not like your parvenus, whose bitterness springs from their being kept beyond the threshold of the salons of the fashionable caste, but as one who, born in the purple and accustomed to equal association with peers and peeresses, had differentiated from her species and stepped up to higher ground.

The culminating point of my visit was the settlement with the Madras Government of the civil status of the Theosophical Society which, as was remarked in Chapter XXX of the preceding volume, was successfully accomplished on 12th September, 1883, at Ootacamund. For convenient reference, I shall quote in this connection the text of the letters which passed between myself and the Governor in Council. They were as follows :

From Colonel Henry S. Olcott,

*President of the Theosophical Society.*

To The Honorable E. F. Webster,

*Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras.*

SIR,—I have the honor to address you on behalf of the Theosophical Society, of which I am President, and the objects of whose organisation are as follow :

I. (*a*) To promote the feeling of mutual tolerance and kindness between people of different races and religions ;

(*b*) To encourage the study of the philosophies, religions, and science of the ancients, particularly of the Aryans ;

(*c*) To aid scientific research into the higher nature and powers of man.

II. These are our only corporate aspirations, and, since the year 1875—when the Society was founded at New York—they have been openly declared and publicly defended. With them we have exclusively occupied ourselves, and have most strenuously refused to meddle with politics or to advocate any creed to the exclusion of others.

III. The principal seat of the Society's operations was transferred from New York to India in February, 1879, for the greater convenience of our purely Oriental researches, and in December, 1882, was moved from Bombay to Madras for a like reason.

IV. The Society was, in the first instance, an open body ; but it was found in practice that the successful prosecution of physical experiments, in the progress of which the most private thoughts and aspirations of our common nature had to be expressed, demanded a more confidential relation between members. The principle of secrecy, identical with that of Free Masonry and Odd Fellowship, and with the same laudable motive, was therefore

adopted as early as the second year of the Society's existence.

V. Our work being thus cut off from public view, many ladies and gentlemen of good position, socially, joined us, both in America and Europe—where branches after a while sprang up. But coincidently with our coming to India this private relation between ourselves, and the great favor which our endeavors to revive Aryan learning excited among Hindus, caused a suspicion—to the last degree unjust and unfounded—that we might have under the mask of philosophical study some political design. Accordingly, the Government of India, at the instance of Her Majesty's Home Government, caused us to be watched both at Bombay, our residence, and while travelling over India. There being nothing whatever to discover of the nature apprehended, the expense and trouble lavished upon us only ended in proving our blamelessness of motive and conduct. For sufficient proof of which I would respectfully invite attention to the enclosed letter [No. 1025 E. G., dated Simla, the 2nd October, 1880] from the Secretary to Government in the Foreign Department to myself —which I transmit in the original, with request for its return. It is therein remarked that "the Government of India has no desire to subject you (ourselves) to any inconvenience during your (our) stay in the country," and "so long as the members of the Society confine themselves to the prosecution of philosophical and scientific studies, wholly unconnected with politics, . . . they need apprehend no annoyance, etc., etc."

VI. The above decision is in strict accordance with the oft-declared policy of Her Most Gracious Majesty's Asiatic relations with subjugated peoples, to maintain strict neutrality in all matters involving religious inquiry or belief; and, having ever faithfully observed the laws and respected the established regulations of Government in India—as everywhere else throughout the world where our Society has branches—we are entitled to protection, and demand it as our right.

VII. Entire freedom from annoyance and molestation we have not enjoyed in the Madras Presidency. In various quarters a certain pressure, none the less menacing because unofficial, has been put upon Hindu subordinates to prevent their taking active interest in our work. Though the vindication of the wisdom, virtues, and spiritual achievements of their ancestors was involved, they have been made to feel that they could not be Theosophists without losing the goodwill of their superiors—possibly their chances of promotion. Timid by nature, the subordinates have, in many—though, to the honor of true manhood, be it said, not all—instances, sacrificed their feelings to this petty tyranny. But despite all opposition, whether of sectarian bigotry or other kinds, the Society has so rapidly increased, that it has already founded twenty Branches within the Madras Presidency. An impartial inquiry among our members will show that the influence upon the natives is excellent: improving their moral tone, making them more religious, more self-reliant, and more tractable as subjects. Should the Government

of Madras care to test the truth of this assertion, I shall most gladly furnish every needed facility.

VIII. In view of the above facts, what I respectfully ask is, that the Government will make it understood that so long as the Theosophical Society shall keep to its declared field of activity, an absolute neutrality shall be observed towards it by officials throughout the Presidency ; and especially forbid that the fact of membership or non-membership shall even be considered in determining the claims of any *employé*, English or Native, to official favor.

I have the honor to be, sir,
Your most obedient servant,
H. S. OLCOTT,
*President, Theosophical Society.*

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PUBLIC DEPARTMENT

*Proceedings of the Madras Government*

Read the following [foregoing] letter from Colonel H. S. Olcott, President, Theosophical Society, dated 7th September, 1883 : (1) stating the objects of the Society ; (2) transmitting a letter addressed to him by the Government of India, Foreign Department, of 2nd October, 1880, promising the members of the Society freedom from all annoyance so long as they confine themselves to the prosecution of philosophical and scientific studies wholly unconnected with politics ; (3) complaining that in various quarters of the Madras Presidency, some native subordinates have

been made to feel that they cannot join the Society without losing the goodwill of their official superiors.

ORDER

13*th September*, 1883, *No.* 1798

Colonel Olcott may be assured that this Government *will strictly follow the lines that have been laid down by the Government of India* in their letter to his address. In regard to the complaint he has preferred, they observe that it is of a general nature only, no specific instances being mentioned; and His Excellency the Governor in Council need only say that he would *highly disapprove any interference with the religious or philosophical ideas* of any section of the population.

[True Extract]

(Sd.) FORSTER WEBSTER,

*Ag. Chief Secretary.*

To COLONEL H. S. OLCOTT,

*President, Theosophical Society.*

I have elsewhere mentioned H. P. B.'s inheritance of the fiery temper of the Dolgoroukis, and the terrible struggle it was to even measurably subdue her irritability. I will now tell a story which I had from her own lips, and the incidents of which had a most lasting effect upon her through life. In childhood her temper was practically unrestrained, her noble father petting and idolising her after the loss of his wife. When, in her eleventh year, the time came for her to leave his regimen and pass under the management of her maternal grandmother (the wife of

General Fadeyef, born Princess Dolgorouki), she was warned that such unrestrained liberty would no longer be allowed her, and she was more or less awed by the dignified character of her relative. But on one occasion, in a fit of temper at her nurse, a faithful old serf who had been brought up in the family, she struck her a blow in the face. This coming to her grandmother's knowledge, the child was summoned, questioned, and confessed her fault. The grandmother at once had the castle bell rung to call in all the servants of the household of whom there were scores, and when they were assembled in the great hall, she told her that she had acted as no lady should, in unjustly striking a helpless serf who would not dare defend herself; and she ordered her to beg her pardon and kiss her hand in token of sincerity. The child at first, crimson with shame, was disposed to rebel, but the old lady told her that if she did not instantly obey she would send her from her house in disgrace. She added that no real noble lady would refuse to make amends for a wrong to a servant, especially one who by a lifetime of faithful service had earned the confidence and love of her superiors. Naturally generous and kind-hearted towards the people of the lower classes, the impetuous child burst into tears, kneeled before the old nurse, kissed her hand, and asked to be forgiven. Needless to say she was thenceforth fairly worshipped by the retainers of the family. She told me that that lesson was worth everything to her, and it had taught her the principle of doing justice to those whose social rank made them incapable of compelling aggressors to do rightly towards them.

All who have published reminiscences of her childhood—Mme. Jelihovsky, her sister; Mlle. Fadeyef, her aunt; Mr. Sinnett, and others—testify to the innate kindness and chivalrousness of her disposition, notwithstanding her inability to restrain her tongue or her temper, which too often, as at Ooty, brought her into trouble. But whatever her faults, there is one chargeable to a high-placed lady at Ootacamund which does not redound to the latter's credit. My readers may remember my telling in the previous volume of H. P. B.'s "doubling" a valuable topaz or yellow diamond in a ring for Mrs. Sinnett while we were together at Simla. She did a similar favor for the lady friend at Ootacamund, a duplicate being made for her by H. P. B. of a valuable sapphire. In the course of time she and the lady fell out, or rather the lady fell away from her, but *kept the stone*, which she had had appraised by a jeweller and found its commercial value to be quite two hundred rupees. If poor, impecunious H. P. B. had played her—as was pretended—the trick of passing off a valuable sapphire (which she did not possess before it went from her hand to the lady's) as a mysterious *apport*, at least the recipient *kept it* and made the only profit out of the transaction!

Two days after receipt of the Order in Council, we two left beautiful Ooty in tongas for Coimbatore, where we tarried three days, receiving visitors, answering questions, and taking candidates into membership. I lectured on two successive days and did a good deal of psychopathic work: on 19th September, it appears, I mesmerised thirty large jars of water and

seventeen bottles of oil for the use of the sick. H. P. B. was present when, in the usual formal way, I organised a local Branch under the name of the Coimbatore T. S. Our visit finished, we left for Pondicherry, followed by warm protestations of affectionate goodwill. This was one of the two or three occasions only in which my colleague even assisted in the formation of Indian Branches, despite the foolish idea entertained by many, ignorant of the facts, who constantly talk of her personally founding our Branches and wearing herself out with travel and its privations. Greater stuff was never spoken : her sphere was the literary and spiritual one, and her travelling in those days was mainly limited to the distances between her writing-table, the dining-room, and her bed. She was as unfit for platform and pioneer organising work as she was for cooking ; and when we remember that she thought to get boiled eggs by laying them, raw, on the hot coals, her culinary aptitude is easily gauged. Moreover, she had too much sense to try it, but kept strictly to her own department, as I did to mine.

From the Nilgiris to the French territory of Pondicherry one has to cross country from West to East by rail, at Villupuram Junction changing to a short branch line of twenty-six miles that takes one to Pondicherry. An amusing episode occurred between the two stations, At the Junction a certain elderly Hindu gentleman of our acquaintance accosted us with the usual signs of exaggerated reverence, so easily seen through by foreigners, and begged me to cure a paralytic—some rich or influential person—

who would apply to me before reaching Pondicherry. Now this was too much for good nature ; if I was to be pestered from morning to night by patients while stopping at stations, at least I ought to be allowed to rest myself while travelling. Naturally, I refused the man's request ; but he stuck to me like a leech, got into our compartment of the train, and urged, and fawned, and begged until he wore out my patience. Just then we came to a place where there was a halt of ten minutes, and my pest abased himself to the dust to persuade me to get out and cure his man, whom we saw sitting in an arm-chair on the platform with a number of people about him. In desperation, and to rid myself of the man's importunities, I got out, went over to the sick man, handled his paralysed limbs, made mesmeric passes over them with a little massage, got his arm flexible, then his leg, made him stand, walk, put his bad foot on his chair, lift the chair with the just-paralysed hand, and then, as the engine whistle blew, salaamed the company and ran back to our carriage. All this while H. P. B. had sat at a window, smoking a cigarette and watching my performance : she had never seen me at this work before and was deeply interested. As the train started, we saw my cured paralytic walk off, followed by his party and by a servant carrying the chair ; not one of them looking behind him. The effect upon H. P. B. was most comical to me and set me to laughing heartily. The language she used was choice and so strong, that if her words had been leaden shot and hurled at their mark by the full force of her wrath, the backs of the retreating company would have been

well peppered. Such ingratitude, such base and disgusting ingratitude, she had never seen in her life. "What do you mean?" I asked. "Mean? why, there was that man almost licking your feet in the train to get you to heal his friend; you heal him in the most marvellous way, on the platform, while the train stops ten minutes or so; and he, his friend, and his friend's friends calmly walk away, without a word of thanks or even a backward look of thankfulness. That beats everything I ever saw!" I told her that if she had travelled with me and seen my mesmeric healings, she would have realised that the number of patients who had shown real gratitude for benefits conferred were far less than one in a hundred: that if the other ninty-nine were really grateful, they concealed it from view, and left me to practise the rule that Srī Krishna gave to Arjuna, to do the necessary thing and care naught for the fruits of action. But she never forgot the incident.

## CHAPTER II

## AN ADEPT SEEN AT PONDICHERRY

Can any of H. P. B.'s old friends figure to themselves how she must have looked and felt on being received at a railway station by a Governor's band playing "God Save the Queen," and then taken in procession, to the clang of music, to our lodging-house? That is just what happened to us on reaching Pondicherry, and I draw the veil over the amusing picture, as I have not the talent of Bret Harte to do it justice. At the house, in the presence of a select number of dark-skinned French "citizens," an address in a rickety sort of French was read to us and duly responded to by me; after which presentations, welcomes, and compliments followed, and our rooms were thronged by visitors day and evening. The next morning I had ceremonial visits to make to His Excellency the Governor, His something the Mayor, and various other local officials, by all of whom I was courteously and kindly received. Then I had a look through the town, upon which the French *cachet* was placed wherever possible—the blue-and-white enamelled street signs at the corners, the little side-walk tables and chairs at restaurants, the Paris names and shops *in petto*, the French look of the Place Dupleix, the

unmistakable French look of the functionaries and white traders, the very aping of French manners by the natives. This little seven-by-nine colony, comparatively to British India as big as a postage stamp, and hemmed in by it on the three land sides, was totally unlike it, even in the attitude of the white and dark races towards each other. That, indeed, was what struck me most forcibly, accustomed as I had become to the immense gulf between the races in the Great British Dependency. My introducer to all these high officials was a dark, almost black, Tamil gentleman, a Membre du Conseil ; and I was no less pleased than surprised to see how they received him as an equal, quite as though his dark skin did not prevent his being a human being as good as themselves. While I might have been amused to see my friend playing the citizen, I was not amused, but very much gratified, to see that his right to respect was freely conceded.

Before our arrival it had been arranged that I was to lecture in English and the Mayor would translate me into French. At the appointed hour I confronted a large audience of both races ; the Mayor presided and I began speaking, but after a sentence or two, paused for my interpreter to take up the running. This went on for perhaps ten minutes, when the Mayor confessed that his stock of English was exhausted, and called the Interpreter to Government, a French gentleman, to replace him. Five or six sentences finished him up, and a third translator, a Tamil, was brought forward, but he broke down almost at once. It is a matter of common observation

that foreigners of every nation understand English when spoken by one of themselves much better than when we speak it, the accent making it more comprehensible. There I stood feeling like a fool, and ready to give it up as a hopeless case ; but the Mayor, in his best French, told the audience that he had had a long conversation with me on Theosophy that morning, and that I knew quite enough French to speak without interpretation, whereupon I was called upon from all parts of the room to go ahead, and that I had finally to do despite my excuses and protestations. In a fashion that I dare not look back upon, I went on, and on, for more than an hour, expounding our ideas and Eastern philosophy as best I could ; and the audience were kind enough to signify by loud applause that in coming out to India they had brought with them that lovely national trait of courtesy and forbearance for strangers who try to speak their tongue. You should, however, have seen the face and gestures of H. P. B. when I returned home and told her what I had done. She held up both hands in amazement, and made comments strongly suggestive of her horror at the possible and probable mistakes I had made in the use of genders and verbs ! However, I did get through after a fashion, and we did form a T. S. Branch in the town, which was the chief thing after all.

I was so busy telling her the above and hearing her comments, that beyond a sweeping bow to the dozen or so of visitors sitting on the floor about her, whom she had been entertaining during my absence, I took no notice of them. She, however, presently gave me a

certain look, and by slightly inclining her head, made me look towards her right at one man who sat behind the others, and who met my startled gaze with a kindly smile. It was none other than one of the Masters known to me at New York during the writing of *Isis Unveiled*: one who disliked English so much that he always spoke and wrote French in his communications with me: the very one who gave me that cutting rebuke by duplicating several times the lead-pencil I hesitated to lend "H. P. B."—his temporary shell. I can't say if the others saw him, but certainly they could not have left him so unnoticed if they had, for he was to them, in majesty, as a lion to a whippet. I longed to approach and address him, but his eyes expressed the command that I should not, so I took my seat on the floor to H. P. B.'s left, where I had him in full view. The company did not stay long after my arrival, and he, after saluting H. P. B., like the rest, with folded palms, in the Indian fashion, spoke a word or two to her apart and followed them out.

We left Pondicherry for Madras, September 23rd, and got home that afternoon, rejoiced to see the dear place again. As usual after a tour, I had no end of arrears of correspondence and literary work to make up, but by the next midnight it had been disposed of. On the 25th we celebrated the first Anniversary of the Madras T.S. at Pachaiyappah's Hall, a great crowd attending. Besides myself, Dewan Bahadur R. Raghoonath Row, and the regretted T. Subba Row made speeches. My stay at home was so very brief, that on the 27th I started again on a long journey to

the northward, with our friend L. V. V. Naidu as my Private Secretary. Bellary, Adoni, and Hyderabad—the Nizam's capital—came in sequence, and the usual events of Branch-making, question-answering, and patient-healing occurred. My receptions by friends were always kind, and personal ties of brotherhood were made which are still unbroken.

At Mr. Narasimhalu Chetty's house, at Hyderabad, there was a most interesting case of the cure of blindness in one eye within the half-hour's treatment. I remember it so well. Facing the house, on the farther side of the road that skirted the compound, stood a telegraph pole. The patient, an adult Hindu, had been brought to me by his physician, Dr. Rustomji, F.T.S., to the upper verandah, where I sat talking with friends. He had done his best for the patient, but had failed to even temporarily relieve the total blindness of the eye. It looked as healthy as the other one, but, on testing in the usual way, I found that it was unmistakably sightless. I therefore breathed upon the eyeball, "with mesmeric intent," through the small silver tube I carried in my pocket for that purpose, made the proper passes over the forehead and nape of the neck, and after the time mentioned had the pleasure to receive the patient's joyous assurance that his sight was restored. To make sure, I laid my finger on the other eyeball and told him to describe what he saw straight ahead of him. He at once said: "The compound, the fence, the gate, the road, and a telegraph pole; on the glass knob to the right hangs a bit of colored rag." All was correct. The doctor was perfectly delighted, while

as for the patient, after a prostration before me he hurried away. When the doctor and I came to talk over the case, I wanted to recall the patient for us to make an optical examination with an instrument, but Dr. Rustomji soon brought back word that the fellow had gathered his few effects together and hastened away to his village to take his people the glad tidings. Whether the rumor of this got spread through the town or not I cannot say, but certainly my audience the next day was so great, that the hall was—as a Hindu correspondent wrote to his paper about another such meeting—"crowded to the proverbial pin-drop," and we had to adjourn to the compound and let them spread over the lawn. Secunderabad, Bolaram, Sholapore, and Poona followed next: at the latter place—I see by my Diary—I received the shortest address on record—a model of brevity. The members met me at the station, drove me to the bungalow prepared for my accommodation, got the company placed, and then the spokesman, taking my hand, said: "Mr. President and dear brother, I welcome you to our station." I replied: "Thank you heartily," and that finished it. Oh! that those concocters of long, tiresome addresses in Sanskrit, Pali, Sinhalese, Tamil, Telugu, Bengalee, Urdu, Hindi, Hindustani, Guramukhi, Marathi, Guzerati, and a dozen other, to me unknown, tongues that I have had to listen to, often at midnight or even at 4 o'clock in the morning, after a long, bone-banging railway journey, could only have had the inspiration of the Sholapore President, how happy it would have made me. At this station a new recruit—Mr. W. T. Brown, of

Glasgow, "Poor Brown"—joined me for the tour. He, and a Mrs. Sarah Parker, of Dublin, had just arrived at Madras under the impulse of service, and Brown had volunteered to help me. I wrote him from Hyderabad a kind but most explicit letter, warning him of the self-sacrifice he must expect to make; the public ingratitude, individual treacheries, libellous attacks on character, unjust suspicion of motives, bad fare and fatiguing journeys by nights and days in all sorts of conveyances: warning him to return to Europe if he had expected anything else, and leave H. P. B. and myself to continue the work we had begun with our eyes open. His reply was a telegraphic notice of his coming to me, and he overtook me at Sholapore.

The coming into the electric intellectual atmosphere of Poona was a delightful sensation. The cultured Marathi mind is capable of grasping the highest problems of philosophy with ease, and the tone of conversation among the cultured class is as high as one could imagine to exist anywhere, even in a German or English University town. In travelling through the East one feels acutely these contrasts, and gauges towns by the mental standard alone. If you ask me to describe their physical features I could scarcely do it, for the recollection of all these thousands of temples, dharmsalas, tanks, bazaars, streets, and bungalows is almost a dim jumble in the memory; but I can give a pretty fair description of the intellectual state of almost any of the towns and villages which I have visited. Now that I recall it, this is just what I was surprised to find in an old

classical teacher of mine whom I revisited many years after leaving his school ; he recollected almost nothing of the personal appearance of my old classmates, but when I mentioned a name it associated itself with the boy's mind, and as such he remembered him. The subject given me to lecture upon at Hirabag, in the Town Hall, was "The Future Life," and Sir Jamsetji Jijibhoy, the second baronet, occupied the chair. From Poona we moved on to Bombay.

For lack of house accommodation, the Branch put us in large tents on the Esplanade, and we found it very cool and comfortable until the next day, when an untimely storm burst upon the city, and we were drenched with torrents of rain during two days. Our tents became soaked, our effects damp and mouldy, and the flat ground about our camp, not being able to receive the deluge as fast as it fell, was turned into a shallow pond. This meaning fever to us and consequent interruption of work, our colleagues put us into some large empty rooms in the old building of the *Bombay Gazette*, where we were at least dry. A lecture was given on the 17th at Framji Cowasji Hall, and young Brown's remarks at the close were received with great friendliness by the crowded audience.

It may be a relief to some of the readers of these sketches te learn that at Bombay I received orders from my Guru to suspend all healings until further advices, and that the narratives, which must have sorely tried their feelings, will henceforth practically cease. The prohibition came none too soon, for I am persuaded that I myself should have become paralysed

if the strain had been kept up. One morning, at Madras, just before starting on the present journey, I found my left forefinger devoid of sensation —a clear warning to be careful; and between Madras and Bombay it had taken me much longer and demanded far greater exertions to effect cures than it had previously: there was also a much larger percentage of failures. This is not to be wondered at, for, after treating one way or another some 8,000 patients within the twelvemonth, the sturdiest psychopath, let alone a man of fifty-odd, might be expected to have come to the last "volt" in his vital battery: a state to which the tiring journeys, the nights of broken sleep, the often meagre food, and the ceaseless intellectual strain of a large correspondence, daily conversaziones, and almost daily extemporaneous lectures on profound themes must, naturally, have greatly helped to bring about.

On 20th October H. P. B. joined me at Bombay to make a joint visit to the Maharajah Holkar, who had invited us and sent us money for our railway expenses. But a telegram to us at Bombay put an end to the affair, as he was unable to receive us, so H. P. B. returned to Madras and I kept on my pre-arranged itinerary. While at Bombay we received an intimation from King Thebaw, of Burma, that he would be pleased to have us visit him at Mandalay. Mr. Brown, Damodar Mavalankar, and L. V. V. Naidu went North with me; and another F.T.S.—T. Narainswamy Naidu—got permission to join us as a mere companion. To avoid confusion on these long tours, a programme was always settled upon in

advance, and printed copies circulated to the Branches and groups on the route; giving the hours and minutes of my arrivals at and departures from stations, and information as to the kind of food, the quantity of firewood, water, and accommodation required, and all other details: the Branches were left to select the subjects for my lectures, but sometimes neglected it until I was actually ready to mount the platform.

From some of our best-beloved colleagues, who were then living at Jubbulpore, we received an affectionate welcome and good service for seeing persons and places. I visited the High School and the Rajkumar College, one of those schools for young princes and nobles that the Government has founded throughout India. It was interesting to see together these lads who in time will rule over millions, and I spoke kind words of counsel to each class as I passed through the rooms. I was told later that my words had stirred the hearts of the princelings, so that they formed a friendly league between themselves, to keep up their friendship and encourage each other to lead the good life prescribed for kings in the old Scriptures. They all came to my lecture the same evening, which, because of the crowd, was given in the open air.

The next morning we rose at 3.30, and at 5 drove away to the Marble Rocks, one of the tourist's sights of India. To one who had seen Niagara and many great rivers of the world, it was a tame affair. The sacred Nerbudda River is here hemmed in between barriers of white limestone, which it has seamed and cross-seamed with numberless cracks. The rocky

scenery is rather artistic *in petto* than grand and imposing ; though by moonlight it must seem quite fairy-like. Far more striking to me was an old Bawa (ascetic) whom we found living in an adjacent cave. He had great repute as a proficient in the physiological feats of Hatha Yoga, and obligingly performed a number of them—not a whit more difficult than those one sees in our modern European variety halls and hippodromes—at my request. He told us that he had spent the past forty-seven years of his life in making *Pradakshina* (circumambulation) of the Nerbudda River as a work of merit ; the distance to travel is 1,800 miles, and the time occupied in each circuit of his foot-pilgrimage three years. He was a fine, hale man, with a bright eye and the expression of a firm character on his face. While I was studying these details, I was startled by his asking me to be good enough to teach him how to concentrate the mind ! If that was what his half century of struggle had resulted in, certainly it offered no inducement for anybody else to try his Hatha Yoga. Here was a man who had got his body under such control that he could almost turn himself inside out and walk down his own throat, but had not yet learned how to fix that wandering mind which gives us so much trouble. Needless to say, I " improved the occasion " to tell him a little homely truth about seeming and being, on the lines of the *Gita*, the *Dhammapada*, and St. Matthew, xxiii. What a lesson it is in self-development !

My lecture that evening was upon the necessity for a revival of Sanskrit literature, and at the close I

started a subscription for the opening of a Sanskrit School, towards which the handsome sum of Rs. 1,500 was pledged with a great show of enthusiasm. The same idea was broached by me at my first lecture at Allahabad, whither I went from Jubbulpore. The great audience caught at the idea at once, and Rs. 2,007 was subscribed that evening, and Rs. 2,500 more was reported at a meeting of the local Branch on the 30th as having been inscribed on the subscription paper.

On the 31st we moved on to Ghazipore, where we were given hospitality by the Maharajah of Dumraon, and where, on arrival, I had to reply to three addresses, in English, Sanskrit, and Urdu—to the last-named two through interpreters. The next halting-place was Cawnpore, of tragic memory, where the bungalow of the Maharajah of Burdwan had been placed at my disposal. When we drove through the compound we found the house illuminated with 1,000 *chirags*, or Indian clay lamps, and the rooms were a blaze of light.

## CHAPTER III

## THE MASTER K. H. AT LAHORE

THIS Cawnpore visit was made memorable to me by the proofs I got of Damodar's rapid psychical development. As stated elsewhere, he had been visited when a lad, during a severe illness, by a glorious Personage, whom he was enabled to identify many years later, after connecting himself with our Society, as one of the Masters. The intimate relationship of teacher and pupil had then been established between them, and Damodar had thrown himself heart and soul into psychic training; regulating his diet, devoting specified hours to meditation, cultivating a spirit of perfect unselfishness, and working night and day, to the uttermost limits of his strength, on the duties of the official position I gave him in the Society. His coming with me on the present tour was by command of his Guru, and throughout the journey we had many proofs of the progress he was making in spiritual unfolding. I remember that he astonished me, that evening of our arrival at Cawnpore, by giving me, verbally, a message from the Master in answer to my surmise as to what I ought to do in a certain matter that had just turned up, and telling me

that I would find it written out in a note that was even then in my locked writing-desk, the key of which was in my pocket, as it had, of course, been all day. On going to the desk and unlocking it, I did find the very letter he had mentioned, and which, by the by, was from Mahatma K. H., in the handwriting subsequently pronounced by the sage S. P. R., on the authority of the infallible Mr. Netherclift, to be of H. P. B.'s concoction and nothing else ! As H. P. B. and I were then five days' postal distance apart, the forgery theory will hardly cover the Cawnpore incident.

On the second day after reaching Cawnpore, I received from Adyar a rather large mail that had been readdressed to me from there. Among the letters was one from the late Mr. Sam. Ward, dated at Capri, and enclosing a note to Mahatma K. H., which he begged me to have forwarded if possible. As Damodar was then going nightly in astral body to the *ashram* (residence) of that Master, I handed him the letter, saying that he might ask him whether he should bring on the letter, or not. This was on the afternoon of November 4 (1883), and we were at Cawnpore, N. W. P. The reader will kindly keep this in mind in view of the sequel.

On the previous evening I had lectured in the station theatre, a long narrow room with the stage at one end. Agreeably to the repulsive custom that prevails throughout British India, all Europeans, or rather whites, all half-breeds, and even all Christian converts or pretended converts wearing European dress, were given the front seats, and all Hindus, however

high-born or respectable (not always convertible terms), were placed behind them : an aisle ran through the middle of the room. Now I am rather sensitive to the auric "spheres" of persons, and quick at feeling whether they are sympathetic or hostile to myself. Every public lecturer, dramatic artist, and other public character has this same finer sense more or less acutely developed, but I fancy mine is rather quicker than the average. On this occasion I felt as if there stretched between me and the beloved Hindus a barrier, almost a wall, of antagonistic thought, and a less skilled hand might have been stricken dumb by it. But, finding the hostile current flowing towards me from the right, I planted myself opposite the aisle, put my will to work to break through the cross-current, and at last made the connection between myself and the sympathetic portion of my audience. That this is no freak of the imagination, but a very real and palpable fact in human intercourse, will be attested by every person of average nervous sensitiveness whose business it is to speak, sing, or play before the public. More than once it has happened that the presence of a single white man, not a Theosophist, in an audience of Hindus, has acted as a damper upon them and reacted upon me, and for the simple reason that, while between all Asiatics, of whatsoever race and creed, and myself there is a complete sympathy and mutual trust, between them and the average white man there is the distinct mutual antipathy based, as I believe, upon a conflict of auric or mesmeric polarities. Closer personal intercourse and the development of mutual sympathies would change the present

feeling of noli-me-tangere into the same pleasant relationship as that of all Asiatics and all recognised Theosophists.

From Cawnpore we moved on to Lucknow on the evening of 4th November, reached that station at 9 p.m., and were welcomed at the house of Mr. Jwala Prasad, one of our active members. Every minute of the following day was occupied, the details including receptions of visitors, with conversaziones, the trial and expulsion of an unworthy half-caste member, a lecture on "Theosophy and Its Claims," and then, until 1 a.m., private teaching of mesmerism, with illustrative demonstrations on one of the Hindu gentlemen of my suite. Bara Banki followed after Lucknow, and the usual routine was gone through. I must in passing, however, pay a just tribute to the intellectual brilliancy shown by Pandit Pran Nath, F.T.S., in summarising my lectures at the above two places, in Urdu, with an eloquence and unhesitating fluency that were both admirable and remarkable. I have been often placed similarly under obligations by educated friends, for from first to last my lectures throughout Asia have been interpreted in eighteen different languages.

Bareilly next, where I lectured, and then on to Moradabad, where Damodar gave me another proof of his acquired power of travelling in the astral "double". He went to Adyar, conversed with H.P.B., heard the voice of a Master speak a message to me, and asked H. P. B. to telegraph me the substance of it so as to satisfy me of his veracity in these matters. On reporting the facts to me, he dictated the message

as he heard it, and all present in my room signed a certificate as to the facts. The next morning the expected telegram from H.P.B. was delivered to me by the postman, this being the rule in India as to the class of " Deferred " messages. The despatch corroborated Damodar's dictated and certificated message, and again the witnesses who were present signed their names on the back of the Government despatch. The S. P. R. has been pleased to do its best to weaken Damodar's reputation for credibility and mine for common sense in this affair, but the facts are above honestly reported, and their opinion does not concern me in the least.

Aligarh came next on our tour-programme, and here, on the 12th of the month, we came to the sequel of the Ward-K. H. letter affair. At the post-office I received my mail from Adyar, and in it a letter posted at Headquarters *on the 5th inst.* by H. P. B., enclosing Mr. Ward's identical letter to K. H., which, it will be remembered, I received from Italy and handed to Damodar at Cawnpore on the 4th—that is to say, the evening before she posted it at Adyar. Its cover bore the despatching stamp of Adyar, November 5, and the receiving stamp of Aligarh of November 10, the two places being distant apart five days' rail journey. The letter had been awaiting me two days in the Aligarh post-office. I submit this as about as clear a provable case of instantaneous transportation of a material object between two distant points as can be found on record. Collusion and trickery are barred by the evidence of the postal marking described. I have the letter still in my possession, and shall be

happy to show it to anyone save the managers of the S. P. R., whose savage injustice to H. P. B., the most gifted and marvellous psychic of the age, makes it unseemly for those who knew her merits as well as demerits to take further notice of that clique.

In connection with this astral journey, Damodar told me an interesting fact. On putting his body to sleep as usual, he made a dash for the home of the Master among the Himalayas, but found, on arriving, that he too was away in the astral body ; and, by the power of his attraction for his pupil, the latter was swept away as powerfully and instantaneously as though he had ventured into a deep and impetuous river current and been carried off his footing. The next minute Damodar found himself at Adyar, in the presence of both his Master and H. P. B. On going to sleep he had held Mr. Ward's letter in his hand, and it had, it seems, gone along with him on the astral plane—itself, of course, changed from ponderable into astral, or etheric, matter. On telling the Master about the letter, he perceived it in his hand, gave it over to him, and was bidden to return to his place. By the radical power of the occult chemistry or physics, the astralised letter was restored to its solid state, taken by H.P.B., and the next day duly posted to my Aligarh address ; the sequel is known. If I were better versed in science, I should use this incident, together with that of the other Master's turban given me at New York by my astralised visitor, and various other instances of *apport*, as a text for a discourse upon the possible changes in solid bodies, from the densely physical, objective, and

ponderable condition, into that of the invisible, intangible one of bodies on the astral plane. That the changes can be worked in both directions, *viz.*, from the objective to the hyperphysical, and back again into reintegration, or manifestation, is within the personal knowledge of many experienced investigators of psychical phenomena. These sixty-odd chapters of this series of OLD DIARY LEAVES contain enough examples to prove the case, and the eye-witnesses to them are both numerous and unimpeachable : so, too, the works of an army of other writers and experimentalists in this field of natural science support my own statements. What with our X-rays, our Marconi rays, our researches in the Odic Force, in hypnotism, and, by no means the least important, in spiritualistic mediumship (*e.g.*, the cases of Mrs. Compton, Mrs. d'Esperance, and Honto and other materialisations at the Eddys'), we shall soon find ourselves forced to begin again with the alphabet of physical science, and stretch out our hands to the East for help to understand the Nature in which our microcosmic selves have been so long vaunting our wisdom. The phenomenon of my rose-born, half-ounce gold ring, which all my constant readers must recollect, is the only one that I can now call to mind which proves that a solid object can exist within another solid object without possessing tangible bulk and without abrading or disturbing its particles, yet at the same time have appreciable weight. Surely a long vista of physical discoveries is opening out before us.

We went on to Delhi next, where I lectured twice at the Town Hall, and whence I despatched young

Brown and L. V. V. Naidu, of my party, to form a Branch at Rawal Pindi, my own duties precluding my going myself. From Delhi the programme took me to Meerut, the home of that gifted young Hindu lawyer, Rama Prasad, whose work on *Nature's Finer Forces* made him known, some years later, to the whole Theosophical reading public, the world over. From thence to Lahore, where things of great moment happened. Between the two stations Damodar made another astral flight which was capable of verification. Three of us—he, I, and T. Narainswamy Naidu—were in the same railway carriage, Damodar apparently moving uneasily, as if in sleep, on one of the berths : I was reading a book by the lamp-light. Damodar suddenly came over to me and asked the time, which by my watch was some minutes before 6 p.m. He told me that he had just come from Adyar, where H. P. B. had met with an accident ; whether a serious one or not, he could not tell me, but he thought she had tripped her foot in the carpet and fallen heavily on her right knee. The reader will observe that the young man was but a beginner in occult science, and incapable as yet of accurate recollection, in returning to outward consciousness, of his experiences on the other planes of being. I mention this in view of the studied unfairness of the S. P. R. toward him. For my own satisfaction I did two things on hearing his story. I wrote a certificate of the occurrence and got Narainswamy to sign it with me, noting the time ; and from the next station, Saharanpore, telegraphed H. P. B. a question as to "what accident happened at headquarters at about

6 o'clock"? We reached Lahore the next morning at 9, and were escorted to a camp of six tents and four large *shamianas* (open canvas pavilions) which had been pitched for me on the open ground (*maidān*) to the north of the city. We very soon began talking with our friends about the previous evening's incident in the train, and my memorandum was passed around for information : I got the friends present to sign it, and to say that the expected telegram from H. P. B. had not yet arrived. My party left me to take their morning bath and meal, and while I was sitting under the shadow of my tent with Mr. R. C. Bary, Editor of the *Arya* magazine, a Government telegraph peon was seen coming towards us with a brown-covered telegram in his hand. I made Mr. Ruttan Chand take it into his own hands and keep it unopened until the return of our party, in whose presence it should be opened and read. This was done at 12 noon by Mr. R. C. Bary, and the nine present signed on the back to attest the circumstances. The contents were these : "Nearly broke right leg, tumbling from Bishop's chair, dragging Coulomb, frightening Morgans. Damodar startled us." My Saharanpore despatch was received by H. P. B. late at night on the 17th : her reply was dated at Adyar at 7.55 a.m. on the 18th, and I got it at Lahore at noon. The discrepancy in Damodar's statement of details and H. P. B.'s is not even surprising in view of his then stage of spiritual evolution, while the corroboration of the major fact of the heavy fall and the injury to her right knee is full. There have been critics of limited acumen but great

conceit, who wish us to believe that this might have been a vulgar conspiracy between Damodar and H. P. B. to deceive me; but I am not aware that it is likely that a fat woman of 16-stones' weight would give herself a serious injury to her knee for the purpose of befooling me, when she might as easily have agreed with Damodar that he should have seen her doing something that would have been queer and yet harmless in itself, such, for instance, as making antic gestures, tearing a newspaper into bits, or declaiming a Russian or French poem: the explanation has not the support of common sense. And then character counts for something outside the S. P. R., and gentlemen are entitled to some credence when it is not a question of money interests; sometimes even then. H. P. B.'s telegram mentioned a fact until then unknown to us, that Major-General and Mrs. Morgan, of Ootacamund, were visiting at Adyar.

My camp was thronged with visitors during the three days of our stay, and I gave two lectures under the largest *shamiana* to multitudes, with great pots of fire standing along the sides to modify the biting November cold, for the Punjab is the reverse of tropical as to temperature in our winter months. My kind and most capable interpreter was Pandit Gopinath, F.T.S., a well-educated and most enterprising journalist, a Brahmin of Kashmir, well known to Theosophists for his unshakable loyalty to the two Founders.

I was sleeping in my tent, the night of the 19th, when I rushed back towards external consciousness on feeling a hand laid on me. The camp being on an open plain, and beyond the protection of the Lahore

Police, my first animal instinct was to protect myself from a possible religious fanatical assassin, so I clutched the stranger by the upper arms, and asked him in Hindustani who he was and what he wanted. It was all done in an instant, and I held the man tight, as would one who might be attacked the next moment and have to defend his life. But the next instant a kind, sweet voice said : "Do you not know me? Do you not remember me?" It was the voice of the Master K. H. A swift revulsion of feeling came over me, I relaxed my hold on his arms, joined my palms in reverential salutation, and wanted to jump out of bed to show him respect. But his hand and voice stayed me, and after a few sentences had been exchanged, he took my left hand in his, gathered the fingers of his right into the palm, and stood quiet beside my cot, from which I could see his divinely benignant face by the light of the lamp that burned on a packing-case at his back. Presently I felt some soft substance forming in my hand, and the next minute the Master laid his kind hand on my forehead, uttered a blessing, and left my half of the large tent to visit Mr. W. T. Brown, who slept in the other half behind a canvas screen that divided the tent into two rooms. When I had time to pay attention to myself, I found myself holding in my left hand a folded paper enwrapped in a silken cloth. To go to the lamp, open and read it, was naturally my first impulse. I found it to be a letter of private counsel, containing prophecies of the death of two undesignated, then active, opponents of the Society, which were realised in the passing

away of the Swami Dyānand Saraswati and Babu Keshab Chandra Sen shortly after. A point to notice is that the handwriting of this letter, formed in my own palm by the Master K. H. himself, is identical with that of all those others which the sagacious Netherclift, after much dissection of them into their original pothook-and-hanger elements, pronounced to be of Blavatskyan origin! What happened in young Brown's end of the tent he related orally to a great many still living witnesses, and published in his pamphlet, *Some Experiences in India*, my copy of which I cannot lay my hand upon at this moment. But in his other pamphlet, *The Theosophical Society: an Explanatory Treatise*, published at Madras, he says (p. 11): "It will be sufficient here to remark that Mahatma K. H. is a living Adept, and that the writer had the honor of seeing him personally at Lahore and of being spoken to by him and even touched. Letters have been received by the writer at Madras, Lahore, Jammu (Kashmir), and again at Madras, all being in the same handwriting, etc., etc." The foundation having been thus laid, and Mr. Brown's other pamphlet available after a little search, I may say that on hearing an exclamation from his side of the screen, I went in there and he showed me a silk-wrapped letter of like appearance to mine though of different contents, which he said had been given him much as mine had been to me, and which we read together. That he has since swung around a whole circle of changes, and is now a professed Roman Catholic and a teacher in a school of that Church, does not alter in the least the

facts of his receiving this letter as described, and his identifying it as in the K. H. script.

The Master's letter to me connects itself with the visit to me at New York of the other Master when, at my unspoken thought-wish, he "materialised" his turban and gave it me as an objective proof that I had received his visit. The letter says: "At New York you demanded of . . . an objective proof that his visit to you was not a *Māya*, and he gave it; [now] unasked, I give you the present one: tho' I pass out of your sight, this note will be to you the reminder of our conferences. I now go to young Mr. Brown to try his intuitiveness. To-morrow night, when the camp is quiet and the worst of the emanations from your audience have passed away, I shall visit you again for a longer conversation, as you must be forewarned against certain things in the future." He concludes with a remark that will not be very palatable reading to our ingenious American rivals who are trying to play the drama of Hamlet with the Dane omitted. He says: "Ever be vigilant, zealous, and judicious; for, remember that the usefulness of the Theosophical Society largely depends upon your exertions, and that our blessings follow its suffering 'Founders' and all who help on their work."

## CHAPTER IV

## RECEPTION BY THE MAHARAJAH OF KASHMIR

THE experience described in the last chapter was certainly calculated to make a deep impression on the dullest mind; how much more so on one whose highest aspiration was to be permitted to work in some capacity or other with the "Elder Brothers" for the good of the race! If anybody had asked me what was the rarest pleasure that I could imagine, I should have answered: "To see and converse with a Master, for in his benign atmosphere the mind and heart would expand like a flower to the sun and one's being be filled with joy." And here I had had it without the asking. Yet when I came to look back upon it, it was but like a remembered glint of sunshine on a cloudy day, seen for a moment, then gone. The whole time of the interview could not have been longer than ten minutes. The touch of his hand drew me out of the depths of the oblivion of dreamless sleep. I had had a fatiguing day, the tent was very cold, heated only by some embers in a great earthen pot, and I had covered myself to the ears in the bed-clothes. I am touched, I wake with a start, I clutch the arms of my visitor, possibly my would-be assassin; the

sweet, kind voice breaks the last stupor of slumber; he is there, standing beside my bed, his face aglow with a smile; I see it in the chiaroscuro of the back-light. Then the magical creation of the silk-enwrapped letter in my hand, a few words, a farewell salute, he walks past the lamp on the box, his noble form lingers an instant in the tent-door, he gives a last friendly glance at me, and is gone. It is not much as to time, but its memory will last my life through. Years before—as my readers will perhaps remember—I was bidden to go on with my work as if there were no Masters to guide and help, but only Humanity, the "Great Orphan," to labor for: to expect nothing from Them, yet to be ready for anything. So I have gone on until to-day, never asking for help, never holding back for lack of the promise of it, yet never being without it when it was really needed.

This Lahore visit of the Master was but one of many proofs vouchsafed me that we are watched and helped; never deserted, never forgotten, howsoever dark may seem the outlook, howsoever menacing the aspect of things. Twenty-odd years of this experience has begotten a constant calm and an abiding trust in my heart, as it did in that of H. P. B. Sometimes it may be a glimpse of a personage, sometimes an audible voice, sometimes a clear forecast of events, sometimes a message through third parties; like that which Mme. Mongruel, the gifted seeress, gave me in her somnambulic sleep last year at Paris, and which foretold the immediate future of the Society, the duration of my own life, and the aspect of things

towards the end of it. Thus, in the letter made in my hand were predicted the deaths of our two opponents, then most active, and good counsel was given me. Though traitors should fill twenty corner-stones with deliberately concocted lies about the history of our movement, and for ever suppress my name and Mrs. Besant's from their falsified records, it will profit them not one iota ; the work will go on, and the real workers be recognised, comforted, and helped, so long as they are loyal to their duty.

The next evening, after the visits to Mr. Brown and myself, we two and Damodar sat in my tent, at 10 o'clock, waiting for an expected visit from Master K. H. The camp was quiet, the rest of our party dispersed through the city of Lahore. We sat on chairs at the back of the tent so as not to be observed from the camp : the moon was in its last quarter and had not risen. After some waiting we heard and saw a tall Hindu approaching from the side of the open plain. He came to within a few yards of us and beckoned Damodar to come to him, which he did. He told him that the Master would appear within a few minutes, and that he had some business with Damodar. It was a pupil of Master K. H. Presently we saw the latter coming from the same direction, pass his pupil—who had withdrawn to a little distance—and stop in front of our group, now standing and saluting in the Indian fashion, some yards away. Brown and I kept our places, and Damodar went and conversed for a few minutes with the Teacher, after which he returned to us and the king-like visitor walked away. I heard his footsteps

on the ground, so it was no wraith, but the man in his external body. Observe that it could not have been Damodar masquerading, for he himself formed one of our group of three. Then there are the distinguished personal peculiarities of the two, as unlike as possible, to account for, and the chela, whom I had had to do with for years. Still further proof was given me before retiring, when I was writing my Diary: the pupil lifted the *portière*, beckoned to me, and pointed to the figure of his Master, waiting for me out on the plain in the starlight. I went to him, we walked off to a safe place at some distance where intruders need not be expected, and then for about a half-hour he told me what I had to know, and what does not concern third parties, since that chapter of T. S. history was long since closed. Needless to say I slept very little on either of those two nights. The august visitor told me, however, that he had not come to me of his own motion entirely, although glad to come to me in person; but had been sent by the Authority higher than himself, who was satisfied with my fidelity and wished me to never lose confidence. There were no miracles done at the interview, no magic circles traced on the ground, no gum-burning lamps placed around it and burning with steely-blue flames: just two men talking together, a meeting, and a parting when the talk was over. I can affirm that it was *not* Damodar, but *was* the One I was called to meet; so let it pass.

I broke up camp the next day—November 21—and left Lahore for Jammu, the lower capital of H. H. the

late Maharajah of Kashmir, whose invitation to visit him I had accepted. One of his durbar officers, a Muslim and, strange to say, given to drinking, despite the prohibitions of his creed, had been sent down to escort me from Lahore. Simple affair as this was, there had been protests, explanations, and compromises before it could be arranged. I had heard that the Maharajah's custom was to make presents in cash and costly clothing to his visitors, and I positively declined to accept a single rupee, as incompatible with my lifelong habit. The emissary was at his wits' end between two such stubborn men, and an active exchange of telegrams made things no better until, at last, the cloud rolled by and all was settled in a way to satisfy us both. It was agreed that the *khillāt*, or present, should be given and by me received and receipted for officially, as President of the Theosophical Society, in which capacity I am ready to accept any gifts, however large, that involve no wrong to anybody. So, all being right, our party took the 6 p.m. train for Wazirabad, which was reached at 9.30. My escort had evidently been saying good-bye to friends to some purpose, as his breath smelt very bad in our closed railway carriage, and he was quite half-seas-over. His tongue got to wagging about politics, and I was assured, with mysterious hints and nods, that a revival of Moslem power was certain, and that his fifty million Indian co-religionists would rally under the standard of the Nizam of Hyderabad. After a while I got my fill of this nonsense and the odors of his mouth, and retired to my corner and read. He wanted to stop at Wazirabad, for that

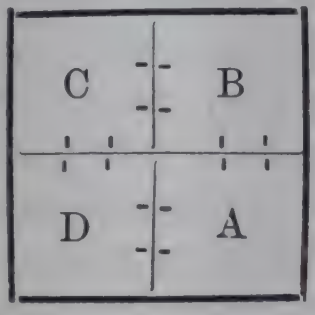
meant the chance for sleep and other things, but I declared my intention of pushing forward to Sialkot. We reached that place by horse-dawk at 3 a.m., stopped at the rest-house until noon, then moved on to Jammu. We left our carriages on the hither side of the River Tavi, and were brought on two of the royal elephants, a distance of two miles, to the huge bungalow that the Maharajah keeps for his more important guests. The road from the river leads straight through the main street of the quaint old town, whose breadth may be guessed when I tell my reader that as our elephants moved their huge bulk forward, horsemen, and even foot-passengers, had to whirl into alleys or clamber into shops to avoid being crushed! And we, seated on their backs, cross-legged in true Oriental fashion, were almost on a level with the living apartments and, if we had been discourteous according to Indian notions of politeness, might have seen the families in their private rooms. At the rest-house we were received by an army of servants with the obsequiousness that means naught else than the hope of *bakshish*. My lordship was asked to name what meats, game, fish, etc., I might prefer, whether I would begin operations now with the customary whisky "peg," and when I would have my meals. They appeared really astonished when I named my simple, non-flesh diet (for that time was included within my five years' trial of vegetarianism), and declined their liquors, wines, and fermented drinks: such a mad white they had never seen before. And then, too, who had ever seen a European gentleman on terms of friendly equality with Indians? Yes,

here were two Sahibs, actually two, travelling with dark-skinned people as if they were as good as themselves, and apparently enjoying their company ! *Bismillah* !

As we learned that a certain famous European doctor had been sent by the Maharajah's request to prescribe for him, and that he would arrive that evening and be lodged in the same house with us, I at once asked our minister-escort to change us into a smaller bungalow that stood near by, for I could not bear the sight of my dear dark-complexioned colleagues being scornfully looked down upon, as they would almost certainly be. My request being granted, we found ourselves very comfortable and independent in a house of four rooms divided by cross walls and with doors of communication. In view of what was to happen, we may as well have the ground plan. Thus :

A.—My room ; used also as dining-room.

B.—Damodar's.




C.—Pandit Gopinath, L. V. V. Naidu, and T. Narainswamy.

D.—W. T. Brown.

The next morning, at 10.30, the same Minister of the Durbar brought me word that His Highness begged the honor of my presence at the Palace. In our compound stood two elephants and four fine saddle-horses, richly caparisoned, with housings and saddle-covers of Kashmir-shawl work, and silver-mounted bridles and stirrups, awaiting my pleasure,

with a guard of honor of armed sepoys. I chose the elephants, so we mounted the sagacious, kneeling beasts and went on our way, the sepoys in front to clear the road. I made the discovery that elephant-riding is not so bad when one sits on the pad in Eastern fashion, the legs crossed. I had tried it elsewhere in a *howdah*, or structure with raised seats, and in spite of its being covered with plates of silver and otherwise gorgeously gotten up, one rode most uncomfortably, being shaken about like a bag of meal on an oscillating pivot. Again we threaded the narrow streets of Jammu, driving all wayfarers to the nearest shelters, and at last reached the Palace. There were the usual enclosing walls with massive gates, the outer compound with horses, elephants, camels, oxen, donkeys, heavy wains, light vehicles (*ekkas*), piles of straw, bags of grain, building materials, etc., all in confusion, armed sentries pacing their beats, and soldiers in untidy undress lounging about. Then came an inner court and the Palace gateway, through which we passed, mounted a wide staircase and found ourselves in the Presence Chamber. I forget after these fourteen years how it looked, but a vague memory of general untidiness remains in my mind. The Maharajah came soon and received me with an air of kindness and stately courtesy that showed beyond doubt that I was welcome. In compliment to him I wore the woollen dress of the better class in the Punjab—pyjamas, a sleeveless waistcoat with deep flaps, an outside *choga*, or long robe, striped Kashmir socks, and purple slippers embroidered with imitation gold

braid—which, of course, I left at the door. His first expression to Pandit Gopinath, my interpreter, was one of pleasure to see me in his national costume. A carpet and back-bolster had been spread for him on a slightly raised platform, before which we were to sit on the carpeted floor; but he dragged the bolster from there, placed it on the floor, motioned me to sit beside him, called me his elder brother, and proceeded with the conversation, which he opened with the usual exchange of compliments and good wishes. He was a man of noble presence, with an intellectual face and the splendid eyes of the Hindu, which by turns can be full of pathos, blaze with anger, or penetrating with intelligent interest. His personality fitted the kingly office perfectly, which is more than can be said of some other sovereigns whom I have seen, and who looked rather like cooks or grooms than high-born rulers of men. I found him to be a thoughtful Vedantin, well acquainted with philosophical systems. He fully believed in the existence of living Mahatmas, and trusted in them to do for India all that her Karma made possible, but no more. He gently broached the subject of his own ill-health, said he knew of my cures and of the recent prohibition to continue the practice, but asked if I would not at least relieve the acute pain he was then suffering from. I consented, of course, and on his removing his turban, did what I could for him with mesmeric healing passes. He submitted to my manipulations with perfect docility, which, I must confess, gave me a peculiar sensation, for Americans are not in the habit of handling sovereigns like common men, however they may

theoretically regard them as their equals. I had the pleasure of removing His Highness' pain, and when the audience closed he begged me to visit him twice a day during my stay, that we might talk of the high religious themes which equally interested us.

The same evening, when I was sitting in our bungalow, I saw a queer procession of men enter from the verandah. First came a Court official, attended by a servant carrying a pair of scales and another with some heavy bag on his shoulder, which was gravely laid at my feet. Then followed a string of twenty-one other dark-faced, turbaned servants, each bearing on his head a flat basket of fruit or sweets, which were piled on each other on the table, counted by the Court officer, and the men dismissed. While I was wondering what all this could mean, Gopinath was told that His Highness received me as a guest of the first-class, and, as such, twenty-one baskets were sent me ; there were guests of three classes, of which the second received fourteen baskets, the third seven baskets , below that people did not count ! He then opened the gunny-bag, poured the contents—silver coins—into the scales, weighed them, and took my receipt for Rs. 500. This, he explained, was "table money," though why he should give me that when our every possible and impossible wish was gratified, I could not imagine. However, it was the custom of the Court of Kashmir, and His Highness' honor was involved in doing things as they had always been done from ancient times by Indian kings.

I went twice to the Palace the next day, and resumed the Vedantic discussions and even the

mesmeric passes. His Dewan (Prime Minister) was present with other officials, including the Chief Justice, and after the free Eastern fashion, dipped into the conversation from time to time. That is a thing that always astonishes Europeans: if there be a wrangle in the street and a crowd gathers, they will turn to listen to a side remark by a boy as readily as though he were an adult. Can it be because, by the accepted belief in Karma, only our encasing bodies are young, the Dweller within the one being as old as that within the other? It is an idea to be considered like any other, at all events.

In the afternoon the Maharajah presided at games and a series of animal combats, and took me to his pavilion and placed me at his side. It being an entirely novel experience, I stayed the thing out, but once was enough. There were fights between rams, elephants, and horses—the first laughable, the second tame, since the elephants were not angry; the third exciting, for the splendid stallions lashed out at each other, screamed and tried to bite. A cock-fight brought the affair to a close.

The Chief Justice spent the evening with me in pleasant talk, in the course of which he dropped the remark that the Maharajah was "so taken with me that he would give me anything I might ask for". I took this for what it was worth, but after the Judge had gone, young Brown, to my amazement, asked me to get him the appointment of Judge. "What!" I said, "you, who came to India to devote yourself to unselfish work; whom I warned by letter to expect naught but the chance of self-sacrifice; who have just

been honored with a visit and letter from a Master, a distinction that has been withheld from some of the oldest of our members—you are ready to snap at the first temptation, and take a post for which you are not qualified ?" I explained to him that if indeed the Maharajah respected me, it was because he had become convinced that I would not take for myself or any private friend any present or favor whatever. He at last saw the point and said no more ; but his character-gauge had been exposed to me once for all, and his subsequent career has corroborated my impressions.

I went as usual, the next day, to the Palace, and in the afternoon saw a review by General Prince Ram Singh, Commander-in-Chief of the Kashmir Government Service troops, which have since then behaved so splendidly in the various British Border Expeditions. This was all very fine, but an event occurred that night which drove the recollection of everything else out of my thought : Damodar disappeared from his room, and was not to be found when I looked there for him in the early morning.

## CHAPTER V

## MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF DAMODAR

DAMODAR had disappeared, and left no trace behind him as a clue to show me whither he had gone or when he would return, if ever. I hastily went through the four communicating rooms, but they were empty; my other companions having gone to the river for a bath. From Damodar's window I called to a servant, and learned from him that Damodar had left the bungalow, alone, at daybreak, but left no message. Not knowing exactly what to make of it, I returned to my room, and found lying on the table a note from a Master, bidding me not to worry about the lad as he was under his protection, but giving me no hint as to his return. It had taken but a minute or so to make the circuit of the four inter-communicating open-doored rooms, and I had heard no messenger's footstep in the gravelly compound; a person could hardly have entered my room between my leaving and re-entering it, yet here was the mysterious letter, in the "K. H." writing and familiar Chinese envelope, lying on my table.

My first instinct was to take Damodar's luggage—his trunk and bedding—and pack it away under my own cot. I then despatched a telegram to H. P. B., telling her of his disappearance and of my having no idea as to his return. When the bathers got back

from the river, they were naturally as excited as myself over the incident, and we wasted much time in speculations and surmises as to its possible sequel.

I went twice to the Palace that day and found myself increasingly welcome to His Highness. He showed me every courtesy, discussed the Vedanta philosophy with evidently deep interest, and gave me a pressing invitation to accompany him the next time he should go to his Kashmirian capital, Srinagar. Just as evening was closing in, and I was sitting alone, writing, in our bungalow, the others having gone for a ride on horseback, I heard a step on the gravel outside, and, looking around, saw a tall Kashmiri-costumed telegraph peon (messenger) bringing me a message. On opening it, I found it to be from H. P. B., in answer to mine. She said that a Master had told her that Damodar would return, and that I must *not let his luggage, especially his bedding*, be touched by any third party. That was strange, was it not, that she, at Madras—*i.e.*, some 2,000 miles away—should tell me to do the very thing it had been my first impulse to do on finding out the lad's departure? Was it long-distance telepathy, or what? There was something stranger yet to come. To open and read the despatch had not taken me a minute; the peon had not had more than time enough to get across the verandah into the compound when, like a flash, it came to me that the form of the peon was not real but a Māya, and that he belonged to the Brotherhood: I knew it, I could swear to it, because of a certain psychic disturbance caused in me by the

approach of one of those personages; in fact, I could presently identify the peculiar vibration set up by the mesmeric current of my own Teacher, who was also H. P. B.'s Teacher. I ran to the door and looked across the bare compound, in which were no trees or bushes to serve as hiding-places, but nothing was in sight: the peon had disappeared as if into the ground.

I have been asked, when telling this story, how the transfer of the despatch from the keeping of the real peon to the simulated one, and the return of my signed receipt to the telegraph office, could be accounted for unless the messenger had been a consenting party. The thing is very simple, provided the reality of hypnotic power be conceded. The perfected hypnotism of the Orient I mean: not the rudimentary stage of it to which the schools of Nancy and La Salpétrière have hitherto attained; the secret of Māya, in short. The adept meets the peon; by will-power prevents his seeing him; causes him to become unconscious; leads him to any convenient place of hiding; leaves him there asleep; puts the illusive appearance of the man over his own features and person; brings me the telegram, takes my receipt, salutes, and retires; the next moment, the nervous thrill caused in me by his sympathetic magnetism reacting in himself, warns him that I am on the alert and will naturally come to the door, so he inhibits my sight to prevent my seeing him, returns to the sleeping peon, puts the receipt in his hand, wills that he shall recollect, as if it had happened to himself, the brief episode of our meeting, awakens him,

inhibits *his* sight, and sends him back to the telegraph office. A very simple sequence of events, easily comprehensible for every advanced mesmerist.

It was on 25th November, at daylight, that Damodar left us : he returned in the evening of the 27th—after an absence of some sixty hours, but how changed ! He left, a delicate-framed, pale student-like young man, frail, timid, deferential ; he returned with his olive face bronzed several shades darker, seemingly robust, tough, and wiry, bold and energetic in manner : we could scarcely realise that he was the same person. He had been at the Master's retreat (*ashram*), undergoing certain training. He brought me a message from another Master, well known to me, and, to prove its genuineness, whispered in my ear a certain agreed password by which Lodge messages were authenticated to me, and which is still valid : a fact which certain transatlantic persons might profitably take note of.

At the Maharajah's request I had been giving him some mesmeric passes every day, which seemed to do him good, or, at least, he said they did. He now began to deplore my necessary departure, and begged me to select somebody at his Court to whom I should be willing to give him over for future treatment. Upon this, I looked about me more closely than I had been doing, and found that there were three distinct parties or cliques, each trying to gain a paramount influence over the sovereign, and each as selfish and, it almost seemed to me, unscrupulous as the other. For the first time in my life, I got a clear view of the rotten moral atmosphere of an Indian Prince's Court.

So I told His Highness—for it was my blunt candor that, I fancy, had given him the good opinion of me that the Chief Justice had described in Brown's hearing—I told him frankly that the only person whom I would recommend as his psychopath was his youngest son, Prince Amar Singh, who was then a handsome, honest-looking youth. His Highness approving my choice, I showed the young Prince how to treat his father, and gave him the famous silver tube with which I had worked so many cures of eye and ear affections during the course of that memorable year. But, as I afterwards learnt, no good came of it, for the son stood in such awe of the parent, that he was quite unable to feel, much less show, that firm, commanding appearance of face, gesture, and voice which is indispensable for the psychopath to have when treating a patient. Yet I would not have risked my royal patient's coming under the influence of either one of those scheming courtiers, who would certainly have used the intimacy for their selfish purposes. The Maharajah died a few years later, and was succeeded by his eldest son, who was away at Srinagar at the time of my visit to Jammu, and whom, therefore, I did not meet. The latter was for some time suspended by the Government of India, a Council of Regency was formed, and young Prince Amar Singh was appointed its President. Major-General Ram Singh, the second son, has brought the Kashmir army to such a state of proficiency, that it rendered the most valuable services to the British Commander-in-Chief, as before stated, in recent border campaigns.

The day fixed for my departure having come, the Maharajah, finding me obdurate about prolonging my visit, consented to receive me in audience of leave. So I went to the Palace for the last time, I and my suite riding on elephants, and causing every person, whether mounted or afoot, whom we met in the cramped lanes of Jammu, to scuttle out of our way into the nearest shops, courts, or blind alleys. We found His Highness, with his Prime Minister (Dewan), his Treasurer, and other officials, seated cross-legged on the floor, with a number of piles of woollen stuffs placed before him in a row : one pile much bigger than the rest. Through the able interpreter, Pandit Gopinath, he and I fell into conversation about my departure and hoped-for return, after which, on a signal from the Maharajah, a high official pushed the big pile over towards me, with the request that I should accept the articles as His Highness' *khillāt* (complimentary present). At the same time the Treasurer laid before me two heavy bags of coin. To each member of my suite was given one of the smaller piles of woollens. According to custom, I touched the presents, made a respectful salutation, by joining my palms and holding them edgewise to my forehead, which the Maharajah returned ; we then rose and, saluting the officials in turn, left the audience-chamber, having seen the noble face of our host for the last time. No other reigning Indian Prince whom I have met has left so pleasant impressions on my memory. I speak only as to my personal intercourse with him ; what sort of view the Government of India may

have taken of him as their political ally, I cannot say ; but so far as his treatment of me is concerned, no one could have shown himself a more perfect gentleman, a more generous, self-respecting Prince, or a more thoughtful host. I must not fail, moreover, to express the obligations under which Pandit Gopinath, F.T.S., of Lahore, laid the Society and myself, personally, by his unpaid and invaluable services during this visit and my whole tour in the Punjab of 1883.

When my *khillāt* was examined at the bungalow, it was found to comprise a silk-lined, richly-embroidered *choga* (outside coat) ; a splendid Kashmir shawl, "worked to the centre" ; fine, soft woollen tissue for a turban ; a green neck or waist scarf, with embroidered ends ; and three pieces of *pashmina*, or soft cloth made of goat's hair, for a suit of clothes in the Punjabi fashion. The huge bags of coin contained, each, a thousand rupees ; thus making the whole gift in money to me (or, rather, to the Society, since I receipted for it officially) Rs. 2,500. The Treasurer's Report to that year's T. S. Convention shows that, of this sum, I gave Rs. 1,500 towards the purchase of the Adyar property, and the remaining Rs. 1,000 to the Current Expense Account. The choga and shawl I gave to H. P. B., the turban and three other pieces of fine cloth to other friends, and the little green scarf I kept for myself to protect my throat when on tour. But the moths ate it up before long, and so I kept nothing of the Jammu presents save the memory of the kindness of their donor. The presents of cloths to my suite were similar to my own, but fewer in number and of

rather inferior quality. At 1 p.m. we left on our elephants for the other side of the river, and after a delay of four hours at Sialkot, reached Wazirabad and passed the night there. In the morning Damodar left us for Madras, and we went on to Kapurthala *via* Lahore and Kirtarpur.

Our reception at Kapurthala by the aged ex-Dewan Ramdas; the reigning one, his son Mathura Das; Mr. Harichand, Political Assistant; and other important officials, was most cordial and gratifying. The now so well-known Maharajah was then a child, and the State was administered for him by specially-chosen officials—whether British or not, I do not remember. I found the mental atmosphere much better than that at Jammu, where the sovereign seemed to me the only one who really cared much for philosophical discussions. Moreover, there was not the same heavy atmosphere of selfish intrigue; one could breathe freer. I have noted the fact in my Diary, so it must have been very palpable. While at this station I was the guest of Dewan Mathura Das, and on the third day lectured on "The Nature of Religion," Pandit Gopinath acting as interpreter in his usual fluent fashion. The fourth and fifth days were devoted to the admission of candidates for membership, among them all the chief officials, and to the organisation of the Kapurthala T. S. My visit finished, I left for Jaipur, and reached that unique city the next evening. We were accommodated at the traveller's bungalow —the best in India, so far as my observations go.

Our local colleagues took me the next morning to call on Atmaram Swami, a well-known and respected

ascetic, who had been telling them long before my arrival that he was personally acquainted with our Masters, and that, eight years before, in Tibet, one of them known as Jivan Singh, Chohan, had told him that he need not be discouraged about the religious state of India, for they had arranged that two Europeans, a man and a woman, should soon come and revive the Eastern religions. This date corresponds with that of the formation of our Society at New York, and the intelligence was most important to me. I found the Yogi a man of dignified presence, with a calm, thoughtful countenance, quite a different sort of person from the ordinary ascetic now so common in and profitless to India. His greeting to me was charmingly affable, and he expressed the greatest desire that our members should be encouraged to practise Yoga. I told him that I dared not do that wholesale, for, unless the candidates had the right temperament, and above all, the watchful surveillance of competent teachers, they ran the risk of being seriously harmed by psychical experiments. He agreed with me in this respect, but said that everything had been foreseen and the right thing would be brought about in good time. This has, in fact, proved true, and the marvellous things that have happened with Mrs. Besant, Mr. Leadbeater, and others who were not then even members of the Society, fully corroborate the prognostics made to me in 1883, at Jaipur, by Atmaram Swami.

The same day I had to perform the unpleasant duty of degrading from office and expelling from the Society the Vice-President of our local Branch, for

trying to use his position to get personal favors from an influential Anglo-Indian official and from Mr. Sinnett, both members. This degradation of our Society is an offence so heinous, that I should certainly expel anyone found guilty of it. So long as I live, at least, the honor of the Society shall be protected against such ignoble self-seekers. This business disposed of, I lectured alfresco in the great courtyard of the Maharajah's College to a large assemblage, and at 6 p.m. we left for Baroda, on our homeward journey. After a dusty ride of thirty hours in the train, we reached the Gaikwar's capital, and were met at the station by Judge Gadgil and other valued friends, who took us to our destined quarters, and kept me chatting until 3 a.m. ! The next day, our former evil-wisher having been succeeded by another British Resident, I paid him my respects, and in the evening lectured on the " Proofs of a Future Life " ; a meeting of the local Branch, with fresh admissions of candidates for membership, closed the proceedings of the day.

By the Gaikwar's special invitation I visited him at his magnificent Palace the next day, and had a long talk about several of our philanthropic schemes— among others, the promotion of Sanskrit education and literature, in which he took and still takes much interest. His Palace, as hundreds of visitors can testify, is one of the finest in all India, and will long be a grand monument of his largeness of views as to the dignity of the sovereign of a great Indian State.

From Baroda we went the long journey to Gooty, in the Madras Presidency, halting a few hours between

two trains at Bombay. From Gooty we pushed on in bullock-carts to Kurnool, a distance of sixty miles. A warm welcome made us forget the fatigues of the journey; I received and replied to Sanskrit and English addresses; organised a local Branch; the next morning at 8 o'clock lectured, and at 4 p.m. started back to Gooty, which we reached after riding all night. I completed the formation of our ever active and honorably distinguished Gooty T. S., and at 5.30 p.m. took train again for Madras, where we arrived on the morning of December 15th, thus completing the 7,000-mile tour on time and without accident. What impression the return made on my mind may be guessed from the following line in my Diary: "Home never seemed so delightful, nor my old Chum so dear." These home-comings are an ever recurrent delight, and no place in either of the distant lands I visit seems half so sweet and restful as Adyar.

The approaching Annual Convention now demanded all my attention, and from that onward to the 27th my every hour was taken up with the reception and accommodation of Delegates, the erection of temporary buildings, the preparation of the annual financial and other reports, and the arrangement of the agenda. Dr. Franz Hartmann, a recent acquisition to our membership, turned up on 17th December as Special Delegate from the old New York nucleus and the Rochester and St. Louis Branches. Since he has conveniently forgotten the fact, on seceding with the disloyal American party, I may say that neither Mr. Judge, who wrote his credentials, nor he who

presented them and as Delegate addressed the Convention, nor H. P. B. nor I, had any other idea than that the official, vital, and only centre of the T. S. was at Adyar, and that what was left at New York was a few crumbs of the loaf. However, this has been all explained and backed with historical proofs,[1] so it is useless to dwell upon the subject any longer.

There is an entry in my Diary that rather instructively marks the different uses that a little money can be put to for the making of Karma. On 18th December the Indian public of Madras gave a farewell banquet and reception to a high European official on his retirement on pension, on which they spent Rs. 15,000 ; a few days later we collected a lesser sum to pay for the Adyar Headquarters property. The first event went off with a splutter and glare like a firework ; the money wasted, the subscribers forgotten by the beneficiary of the show : the other gave a permanent home to our Society, a noble housing, a refuge for its Founders in old age, probably a nucleus for the world-benefiting T.S. Oriental Institute that Mrs. Besant, the Countess Wachtmeister, and I have planned out. In fact, when one looks back through the whole career of the Society, one may well be amazed that such a comparatively trifling sum in the aggregate has been spent in pushing its work to the five quarters of the world.

When the Convention opened, the house and outbuildings were crammed with Delegates, and a real

[1] See Annual Address of the President, T. S., to the 21st Annual Convention, at Adyar, December, 1897.

enthusiasm marked the whole series of meetings : our position in India seemed impregnable, not a cloud floated in our sky. Daily phenomena occurred in the "shrine"; six and even seven persons got notes, in English and Indian vernaculars simultaneously, answering questions put by them just before. On the morning of the 28th, out on the lawn, before the opening of Convention, I told H. P. B. how sorry I was that the other Madras members had allowed Judge P. Sreenivas Row to spend so large a sum as Rs. 500 out of his own pocket towards the cost of the Convention, as I was sure he could not afford to be so generous. She reflected a moment, and then called Damodar to her from a group with whom he was talking a little way off. "Go," she said, "to the shrine and bring me a packet you will find there." He went, and within less than five minutes came hurrying back with a closed letter in his hand, addressed on the cover to "P. Sreenivas Row". The Judge being called to us was given the packet and bidden to open it. He did so, and the expression of amazement on his face was indescribable when he drew forth a very kind and affectionate letter to himself from Master K. H., thanking him for his zealous services, and giving him the notes enclosed as a help towards the Convention's expenses. The enclosure was in Government Promissory Notes to the aggregate value of Rs. 500, and on the back of each were written the initials "K. H." in blue pencil. I have given the facts exactly as they occurred, and one of the notes—for Rs. 10—I have kept as a souvenir, by the Judge's kind permission. The points to bear in mind are :

that I myself had heard, but a moment before repeating it to H. P. B., about the Judge's unstinted generosity; that Damodar had gone to the shrine and returned with the money within the next five minutes; that each note bore the familiar "K. H." initials; that neither H. P. B. nor Damodar had then between them one hundred, let alone five hundred rupees, and that the gift was at once reported to all the Delegates clustered over the lawn. That it was not "fairy gold" is evident from the fact of my having one of the very notes now at Adyar, after the lapse of nearly fourteen years.

It was at that year's Convention that the subscription was collected to create the Subba Row Medal Fund, for the fitting recognition by the Society of important contributions to Theosophical literature. The recipients thus far have been Judge Sreenivas Row, H. P. B., Mrs. Besant, G. R. S. Mead, and A. P. Sinnett. The capital is so small that I cannot award the medal out of the interest paid by Government on the deposit every year. I should be glad to have another £100 to add to it. An interesting, though not very important, feature of the meeting was my giving the Five Precepts of the Buddhist religion to Dr. Franz Hartmann, in the presence of H. P. B., four Buddhist Delegates from Ceylon, Damodar, "Bawaji," Tookaram Tatya, and Balai Chand Mullik, of Calcutta. By Dr. Hartmann's request I procured by telegraph the High Priest Sumangala's authority to act for him in the matter.

By the last day of December the greater part of the Delegates had left for their homes, and only our

house-party remained. Thus closed one of the busiest, most encouraging and successful years in our Society's history. To get through my share of the work, I had travelled 16,500 miles in India and Ceylon. The future sparkled with bright promise; but the lower gods were envious, and were already forging the thunderbolt that Mara meant to hurl at us within the next few months; to how little profit, my narrative will show in the process of its unfolding.

## CHAPTER VI

## "COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE"

THE eventful year 1884 now opens out before us—the tenth since H. P. B. and I first met at that Vermont farm-house. What a succession of stirring events and picturesque experiences had followed each other throughout those ten years ; how immeasurably had our field widened, how great the effect upon ourselves and upon others ! The epoch opened upon us amid the weird nightly séances of farmer-mediums, with "materialised," or rather objectified, phantoms of the astral world stalking before us in the gloom, sometimes nodding in dumb show, sometimes whispering, and anon even shouting their commonplace messages to the living ; its close finds us settled in a noble Indian bungalow amid enthusiastic Asiatic friends, every corner of India familiar to me, our Society's name known throughout the world, and its chartered Branches established in various countries : truly, a chapter of romance.

The last of the visiting Delegates to the 8th T. S. Anniversary had hardly left the house before I

resumed my official wanderings. On 4th January I sailed for Bimlipatam, on the Coromandel Coast, the nearest port to Vizianagram, to visit the Maharajah of which ancient Zemindary I had been invited.[1] Among my fellow-passengers was a Scotch gentleman endowed with the "second sight," and, like the Swiss philosopher Zschokke, compelled at times, against his own wish, to see the life-histories of strangers pass before his inner vision in phantom pictures. Everybody who has read Dale Owen or Ennemoser knows the story of how Zschokke silenced a braggart infidel, one of a party of student pedestrians whom he encountered at an inn among the Alps. The feather-brained youths drank deeply and grew very noisy and impertinent. A quiet man at a small table in a corner attracted their attention, and presently the loud-voiced braggart in question, who had denied the existence of God and the soul in the most vehement language, turned to the quiet man and challenged him to defend the opposite view. Zschokke—for it was he—saw, as in a moving picture, the whole of the boaster's life spread out before him, and replied by asking him whether he would admit the existence of a soul if he, the speaker, should tell him the secrets of his past career. The young man laughed the proposition to scorn, and dared Zschokke to expose all, even the most important of his secrets. Thereupon the latter proceeded to do so, and among other disgraceful scenes described one where the young fellow was robbing his master's till. The bursting of such a bomb, it may be supposed, put

[1] The Prince has died since the above was written.

a stop to the idle debate, and the philosopher left the room in quiet dignity unmolested.

On landing at Bimlipatam I found the Maharajah's carriage and pair awaiting me, and after a pleasant drive of some hours, reached Vizianagram. I had "Bawaji" with me as Private Secretary, and my Mussulman servant, Abdullah, to look after my luggage and myself. After making a toilet I drove to the Fort, and was met at the door of his residence by the Prince, who welcomed me with the extreme courtesy for which he is known to the whole European community of Madras and Calcutta, and which has earned from them the title of Prince Charming. He is quite a book-collector, and has a very fine library, most of the books in rich bindings. He talked earnestly and fluently about religious and philosophical questions, but not with the evidently deep interest and conviction shown by the Maharajah of Kashmir. In fact, it struck me that he had no very well formed belief at all in religion, but was mostly concerned in the affairs of the world, its pleasures, and his personal position. I fancy that he had had some anticipation that I would show him phenomena, and that his lack of interest in our Society during the subsequent years marks his disappointment in that respect. However, nothing could have been nicer than his behavior as host, and his conversation, on the four days of my stay, was very enjoyable. Before we left, he refunded to Bawaji the expenses of our journey, gave a considerable order for Theosophical literature, and made a gift of Rs. 500 to the Society's treasury. Two lectures were given,

and a Branch organised at Vizianagram, and on 11th January we sailed for Madras, which was reached on the third day.

I had hardly got back before a small disturbance was created by the brother of one of our Hindu colleagues, who demanded that the latter should at once quit our house under penalty of being outcasted —an ordeal that few Hindus care to face, however zealous they may be as "reformers". Under the ponderous mass of ancient custom, backed by public opinion, the individual is crushed unless he have money to bribe influential *pūjāris* (family priests). This case being referred to me, I ordered both parties to go outside the compound and settle their differences, as I should not permit any caste battles to be fought out within our precincts.

It may be as well to say a few words about the attitude of the Society towards caste and other social abuses that swarm about us. I bracket caste with them, because in the present state of India and the world I regard it as an abuse and even an infringement of personal liberty of action. What it was in the beginning, and why instituted by the unseen Managers of the Aryan race, has been explained to us by Mrs. Besant in sublime language and with masterful ability: as a working part in the plan of spiritual development its excellence is apparent. But like the rusting machinery of an abandoned mine, it is useful to nobody, a cumberer of the high road. I speak my own opinion, of course, and that binds nobody save myself. Unquestionably we find all groups of the race, called nations, differentiate themselves into the

four chief classes that correspond with the four castes of the Aryans, *viz.*, the hand-toilers, the traders, the fighters and rulers, and the teachers of various kinds; undeniably, therefore, the institution of caste by Srī Krishna was a wise act and bore splendid fruits. But the Western class is not a fixed but a changeful thing; the peasant of one day may become the trader, general, or teacher of the next decade: this is proved by a thousand examples. The class, therefore, is not so great an evil in our modern social order as the fixed and immovable condition of hereditary caste, which has fallen from the dignity of a nursing school for reincarnating souls, to the low state of trades guilds, social tyrannies, and unspiritual panditism and miseries of religious hypocrisy. Admitting all this, there is a necessary reformatory work to be carried on by specially-fitted caste reformers, individuals, and societies. It is as much outside the field of our Society's corporate activity as diet, intemperance, widow remarriage, chattel slavery, the social evil, vivisection, and fifty other outlets for philanthropic zeal. As a Society we abstain from meddling with them, though as individuals we are perfectly free to plunge into the thick of either of the fights that they occasion. The Theosophical Society ignores the differences of sex, for the Higher Self has no sex; also of color, for that is neither white, black, red, or yellow like the human races; of rank, wealth, and political condition, worldly power or literary rank, for It is above all these limitations of the physical man—spotless, immortal, divine, unchangeable. That is why, as President, I never

commit the Society to one side or the other of these questions. Mrs. Besant's Central Hindu College at Benares, my three Buddhist Colleges and two hundred schools in Ceylon, and my Pariah free schools in Madras are all individual, not Society, activities.

The Sinhalese Buddhists having secured my promise to go to London and try to settle their religious disabilities, I now began to make the necessary preparations, first for a visit to Colombo for the final arrangement of matters with them, and then for the European journey. In view of possible contingencies of accident to me, I held a Council Meeting on January 20th, at which I put the management of the Society into their hands until my return, and the next day left by train for Tuticorin, the southernmost station in India, whence the British India Company's boats sail for Colombo. The Council deciding that H. P. B. should accompany me to Europe, she also began her preparations during my absence in Ceylon. On the boat from Tuticorin I met two young Russian nobles and a wealthy friend of theirs who had been enticed to India by H. P. B.'s romantic stories in her *Caves and Jungles of Hindustan*, as they appeared originally in the *Roussky Vyestnik*. The young men told me that all Russia had been charmed and bewildered by them.

Reaching Colombo the next morning at dawn, I called a meeting of leading Buddhists, under Sumangala's chairmanship, to consider the situation; and on the following day, at an adjourned meeting at Meligakanda, that useful body, the Buddhist Defence Committee, was formed, with suitable officers and a

very simple and common-sense code of Rules. It was then decided that I should go to London as an Honorary Member and special delegate of the Committee. Visits of conference to the Governor, Government Agent, Inspector-General of Police, and other officials, various meetings with the Buddhists, the drafting of several petitions and addresses and other work followed. In view to possibilities, the Chief priest of the two ancient Royal Viharas at Kandy, together with Sumangala, Subhuti, Dhammalankara, and other priests of the Maritime provinces, united in giving me full powers to represent them in the admission of candidates into the ranks of Buddhism, on their "taking Pansil"—the Five Precepts.

The primary objects that my European visit was intended to realise were : (1) To convince Government of the actual disabilities under which the Sinhalese Buddhists suffered in a case of criminal assault, like the recent bloody attack by Roman Catholics on a Buddhist religious procession, the culprits in which riot had escaped punishment. (2) To induce Government to appoint a Buddhist Registrar of Marriages, so that the Buddhists might not be compelled to get married by an official of hostile religious belief. (3) To get some action taken on the questions of the management of the Temporalities of Buddhist Viharas, whose rights had long been trampled on by their own lay administrators, to the shame of the Colonial officials, who had neglected their duty. (4) To try and secure an order declaring Wesak—the May Full-Moon day, Buddha's Birthday, and consequently the Buddhist Christmas—a public holiday. While

each of the great sects in India enjoyed their own special holidays, the patient, long-suffering Sinhalese had no such act of justice done them. Before sailing, on February 10th, I took Sumangala to the Government House to see the Governor, and a discussion which I had previously held with His Excellency about the Wesak, was resumed between us three, and Sir Arthur gave us encouragement to count upon his friendly action when the question should be referred back to him in due course from the Colonial Office, where I was to broach it.

On reaching Adyar I found there waiting for me Mr. St. George Lane-Fox, the electrical engineer, a new recruit to our ranks. H. P. B. had gone away to Kathiawar with Dr. Hartmann, on a visit to the Thakur Saheb of Wadhwan, one of our members. I hurried up affairs, and on 18th February the Wadhwan party met me in Bombay. On the 20th we sailed for Marseilles, on the "Chandernagore," Captain Dumont—an excellent French steamer and a super-excellent French Commander, whose friendship I have kept ever since. He is now chief manager of the Suez Canal traffic. Our party consisted of H. P. B., myself, Mohini M. Chatterji, and B. J. Padshah, one of the cleverest Parsi graduates of the Bombay University. Then there was Babula, our trusty servant. Before sailing I enlarged the Managing Committee left in charge of Headquarters, by adding to the Council Members Dr. Hartmann, Mr. Lane-Fox, and —Mr. Coulomb. Considering what happened later, this last appointment may surprise some, but nothing whatever had occurred up to that time to make me

have a bad opinion of him. As for his wife, I was as far as possible from suspecting that she had been a party to tricks, either with or without H. P. B.'s knowledge. Not a word of suspicion had been dropped, nor a thing done by her, to my knowledge, of that sort. Of course, if I had had even an inkling of her real character, instead of making her husband (at her request—she saying that he was a proud man and his feelings would be hurt if I left him out) a Committee man, I should have had our servants chase both of them out of our compound with bamboo switches. She seemed to me a hard-working woman, who was doing all she possibly could to keep the house tidy and take care of H. P. B.'s physical comfort: she bought the food, had meals very properly served, and looked after the servants. Often I felt quite sorry for her when H. P. B. scolded her for trifling faults and, I thought, showed ingratitude for her services. Her character I did not admire in the least; she was a gossip and tale-bearer, and gabbled too much about religious matters that she did not in the least comprehend. But she seemed faithful as a dog to H. P. B., and well earned the food and shelter she and her husband got from us. He was handy with tools and fond of using them, so he was given in charge the work of masons and carpenters, that in a large place like ours is constantly needed. He was a quiet, well-behaved person, seemingly perfectly honest, and I liked him well enough to put him on the Committee. A few words of explanation as to the house will be useful.

The main building at Adyar is nearly 100 feet square; there are six large rooms and the Convention Hall (100×28) on the ground floor, and when we moved there, there were one large and one very small room upstairs: the rest brick-and-cement terrace. The large room upstairs was used by H. P. B. as her bedroom, a piece curtained off from which made her sitting-room. I put up a temporary kitchen for her at the N.W. corner of the roof, and the little room over the stairs was given to Damodar. My quarters were in a detached, one-storied brick bungalow in the grounds, distant an hundred yards from the house. To gain access to the upper floor of the main building, one had to go outside on the back verandah and mount by an inclosed brick staircase. When the door at its foot was locked, no one could get to the upper rooms. This should be kept in mind. Soon after coming we had built a room for use as a "shrine," and cut down a blocked-up window in H. P. B.'s room into a door to give access to it. When the room was finished, she moved her desk in and installed herself in it. But her bedroom did not suit her, so she set Mr. Coulomb to work to building another for her at the N.E. angle of the terrace, and this was in progress when we left for Europe. He having charge of the work, and his wife that of H. P. B.'s effects, they kept the key of the staircase, and nobody had the least concern in what the workmen were doing upstairs, as even the materials were carried in at the back verandah without troubling anybody. Damodar was now sleeping and working in the office-room downstairs. The

Coulombs occupied another detached bungalow in the grounds that matched my own. Dr. Hartmann, Mr. Lane-Fox, and the rest of the house-party had quarters either in the downstairs rooms or over in my bungalow, according to their choice. The easy and natural isolation of the upper floor apartments will now be clearly understood, and should be kept in mind when reading the S. P. R. report of the "Coulomb case". We may now return to the "Chandernagore," where day after day we shall find H. P. B. working in the Captain's cabin on a French translation of *Isis Unveiled* which she had undertaken at the request of our French colleagues.

Barring a very little rough weather in the Mediterranean, our voyage was exceptionally calm and delightful : in fact, the Captain said he had never had such an one, taking it throughout. I see that I have taken special notes of the lovely picture that we sailed through when passing the Straits of Messina : a cloudless azure sky, the town of Messina, picturesque Reggio, on the Calabrian side, the winding blue strait, the lighthouse standing out in high light, a red-piped coasting steamer, and a sombre contrast of black clouds massed above Ætna's smoking peak. Along the Italian shore ran the trains with their puffing engines, looking from the deck of our distant steamer like a toy railroad run for dolls. Reaching Marseilles on 12th March, we were sent over to Trioul to be quarantined twenty-four hours for the sanitary sins of Bombay—a vexatious experience just at the end of a long voyage, when we were impatient to set foot again on the solid ground. Trioul is a basin-harbor amid

barren rocks, with clusters of silent grey pavilions and godowns in stone, and a Roman Catholic chapel perched on a rock and capped with its great cross. A tremendous gale had sprung up—the *mistral*, I presume—and our ship was so pushed by it that we broke three cables at our moorings ; if the fourth had parted we must have inevitably been wrecked within the very basin. Happily it did not, and we left the Quarantine early the next morning and got safely to Marseilles ; passing on the way Château d'If, about which rather commonplace, if somewhat old fortress, Alexandre Dumas has woven the golden spell of romance. No wonder tourists actually ask to be shown the cells of Edmond Dantes and the good Abbé Faria, and the rocky precipice from which the future Comte de Monte Cristo was flung as a supposed corpse ; and no wonder the guides actually do show them. When Mark Twain can be forgiven for weeping at the bogus grave of Adam in Palestine, and the whole of Christendom was collectively bamboozled by toe nails of the Holy Ghost, phials of Liebfraumilch, winking statues, etc., and French Spiritistes have recorded improving messages from "Tartuffe," who shall blame the breadwinners at the Château d'If for truckling to the ignorant and harmless curiosity of a public who have been so hypnotised by Dumas' genius as to believe that D'Artagnan and Athos, Dantes and Danglars, were men of blood and bone like ourselves ? Surely their offence is not equal to that of a travelled New York ignoramus, who told me that he had seen the dungeon in the Castle of Chillon where "Lord Byron had been imprisoned

so many years that he had worn a track in the stone floor of his cell"!

We were met, on landing, by our two staunch, highly-cultured friends, Baron J. Spedalieri, the pupil of Lévi, and Captain D. A. Courmes, of the French Navy, who showed us every possible attention and H. P. B. a sincere reverence. Among the throng of her admirers not one was so capable of gauging her literary and mystical abilities as the good Kabbalist of Marseilles. It is my delight to revisit his house every time I pass that way and be folded to the breast of the affectionate patriarch, whose mind is as vigorous now at 85 as it was when my chum and I first sat at his table in 1884.[1] The fidelity and unflagging sympathy of Captain Courmes in our work is matter of common knowledge among all readers of Theosophical literature.

[1] Our good friend has since died.

## CHAPTER VII

## PHENOMENA AND HEALING AT NICE

On the second day after arrival, H. P. B. and I went to Nice for a promised visit to Lady Caithness, Duchesse de Pomar; and Mohini and Padshah preceded us to Paris. Our hostess did everything within her power to make us feel at home in her Palais Tiranty, and to draw around H. P. B. the cream of the nobility that flock to the Riviera in the colder months. Daily they visited us to talk of Theosophy, and on most of the evenings there were meetings at which discussions and expositions were followed by light suppers, for the arrangement of which Lady Caithness had a special talent. If I was delighted by this first intimate view of Continental high life, H. P. B. was still more so in meeting, after many years of voluntary expatriation, her compatriots with whom she could talk Russian by the hour, and get news at first hand of the fortunes and misfortunes of families in whose intimacy her own had always dwelt. Iconoclast she may have been as to some things, but a more enthusiastic Russian than she was never born, albeit she took out her naturalisation papers at New York and forswore allegiance to the Czar and all other monarchs or princes. I fancy she did that, as she

did her two marriages, either as a caprice or for some occult reason not apparent on the surface.

We made two friends extremely well worth having, in Colonel and Mrs. Evans, of Cimiez, a couple who lived in a splendid villa, which was made for us altogether sunny by their cordial welcomes. We also met at Nice Madame Agathe Hæmmerle, of Russia, a lady of high culture, an astonishing linguist, and the regular correspondent of half the noted savants of Europe who give themselves to research in the different fields of Psychology. Then there was an evening with the astronomer Camille Flammarion, of the Paris Observatory, at that time a member of our Society. Two evenings were given in part to mesmeric experiments by M. Robert, the Parisian professional, which were very instructive; and on another occasion Mme. Hæmmerle and I attended a public lecture, with experiments, on the same subject, by Prof. Guidi, the Italian specialist. The disbelievers in thought-transference should be called upon to explain one of these experiments to which I was a party. The lecturer had two lady assistants, of whom one played the piano and the other was the mesmeric subject. He bade us notice the effect of the music on the latter—whom he had proved to us to be in a state of insensibility to pinches, pullings, and loud noises. He willed her to hear the music, and she responded in physical movements to every change in its character, expressing in highly dramatic postures the feeling appealed to for the moment. Pride, anger, mirthfulness, affection, disdain, defiance, terror, were successively portrayed

by this cataleptical being, as though she had been some musical instrument played upon by the pianist's fingers. Signor Guidi then said that if any gentleman present wished to satisfy himself of the power of the subject to receive mental suggestions, he would be glad to give him the chance. I rose at once and offered myself for the experiment. The lecturer came over to me, told me that I must concentrate my thought at the moment when I wished to fix the subject in the *pose* in which she might be at the time, and when he was satisfied that I understood him, grasped my hand for a moment and then stood aside. The pianist was then told to resume her playing, and the hypnotised subject began once more her statuesque poses. I took one good look at her, after which I leaned my chin on my cane and turned my eyes downward, so that I could see her movements through my eyelashes, but she could not get any hint as to my purpose. I let her go on until, in expressing the feeling of sublimity, she was leaning backward, seemingly past the centre of gravity, and was kept from falling only by the contraction of the leg-muscles : it was a posture so difficult, that in the natural state one could scarcely have retained it a minute. Then, without making the smallest gesture or muscular contraction to show my object, I mentally ordered her to become rigid. She responded instantaneously ; the thought had barely been formed in mind before she caught and obeyed it. With her head thrown far back, her torso bent back from the hips at an oblique angle, her arms held at their full length pointing upward, her knees bent forward, she seemed

as immovable as if she were a statue of bronze. It was to me a most instructive experiment ; the more so in that the mere clasping of my hand for a moment by the mesmeriser sufficed to put me in psychical rapport with his subject, without the speaking of a word by him or by me.

The mention above of M. Robert's experiments at the Palais Tiranty recalls to my mind a story that he told us, and which conveys a useful lesson to all mesmeric experimentators. He had a certain very good clairvoyant subject who, one time when he was asleep and lucid, told his mesmeriser that a certain jeweller's shop in Nice would be entered by burglars on a certain night. Thereupon, Robert, seeing a fine chance to help the mesmerist party, and, very likely, to advertise his own business of *Masseur*, went to the jeweller, handed him his business card, and told him to take extra precautions against burglary on the night in question. The jeweller thanked him, but said that he did not believe much in clairvoyance, and that, in any case, his premises were quite secure against burglars. Yet it so happened that the predicted burglary actually was made at the time mentioned. Then there was a fine excitement, a running to the Prefect of Police, and the usual wailing on housetops. Ah ! that address card of the mesmeriser—happy thought ! He must have known something about it and tried to buy him off by the offer of a bribe, failing the receipt of which he had allowed his pals to do the burglary So the card is taken to M. le Prefect, and the poor innocent M. Robert summoned to come and stand an investigation.

He went, was examined, and politely told that the Police were as incredulous as the jeweller about clairvoyance, and he must explain on some more reasonable and common-sense ground his fore-knowledge of the intended burglary. The wretched Robert managed to get off by citing a number of the most eminent personages in Nice to testify to his good character, but he had to pack off secretly his equally innocent clairvoyant, to put him beyond the clutch of the Nice detectives. Perhaps these facts will give a valid reason for the extreme reluctance of every respectable mesmeriser to allow his clairvoyant to aid in the tracking of criminals and the unravelling of crimes. The narrow escape of H. P. B. from arrest in Russia for suspected complicity in a murder, the perpetrator of which she discovered clairvoyantly at her Father's request and the special solicitation of the District Inspector-General of Police, is familiar to many of her friends, and bears me out in the precautionary word I offer to all mesmerisers who are so fortunate as to have under their control a good clairvoyant, whose aid the Police would obtain :—DON'T.

It so happened that the annual "Bataille des Fleurs" (Flower Carnival) came off while we were in Nice, and I was very glad to see one of the most charming ways in which the fashionable world contrives to kill time. The Duchess could not go out herself, but sent me, in charge of one of her lady friends, in her carriage to fall in with the procession. Almost every carriage but ours was bedecked with flowers and garlands, and bunches of them adorned

the horses. From every house fronting the street, flowers were showered down upon us ; the sun shone resplendently, the bosom of the Mediterranean lay like a pavement of sapphires, the cool grey-greens of the olive orchards on the hilly slopes refreshed the eye, and all was joyous laughter, gay trifling, and prankish little tricks of flower-pelting along the route. A pretty Russian Countess up in a balcony asked, by dumb show, of her friend the lady by my side, who I was, and was answered with a mysterious nodding and winking to indicate that she should hear the facts later. She did, and no mistake : the mutual friend told her that I was the Governor of Madras and her affianced husband ! The flower-battle was very pretty foolery, to be sure, yet a saddening spectacle ; for one can realise, in seeing the round of childish amusements followed year after year in changeless monotony, how indisposed the higher circles are to think of serious things, how completely submerged in sensuous pleasures. Yet their religious feelings can be excited to even the point of frenzy by a great preacher or a great idea set in circulation at the right time. At this moment there are many women of the highest social rank, some even among the royalties, who read Theosophical literature and think the Theosophical things : this is a fact well known to me. A bit of leaven is working in the mass, and the influence will grow. But for the several scandals that have been attached to our movement since 1884, an open connection with Theosophy would not be so shunned as it has been, and, to some extent, still is, by the European aristocracy and upper

middle class. The greatest obstacle in our way, however, is the iron hold that social routine has upon those classes, and the almost hopeless submergence of the individual in the fashionable, time-killing, oblivion-seeking round of daily life. Apart from the crowd, these reading and thinking entities would be free to develop all the good in themselves : as it is, they are wasting this present incarnation.

Although I thought, before leaving Adyar, that I had done with my healings, I let myself be tempted to take, at H. P. B,'s request, the cases of three Russian ladies whom we met at Lady Caithness' house on the evening of 25th March—a Princess, a Countess, and a Baroness : the second, a cousin of H. P. B.'s ; the last-named, one of her playmates in childhood. The Princess had a stubborn remnant of a stroke of hemiplegia, which, since twelve years, had prevented her raising her left hand to her head and using her left foot properly. Within a half-hour I freed both limbs from their bonds. The Countess was extremely deaf : after a treatment of fifteen minutes she could hear ordinary conversation, and was enchanted to be able to enjoy the music of a concert that evening, as she had not for years. The third lady I relieved of a minor spinal trouble. H. P. B. and I left Nice for Paris, March 27, many of our new friends seeing us off at the station.

We reached Marseilles at 9.30 p.m., and Paris the next evening at 11 p.m. Mohini, Dr. Thurman, F.T.S., and W. Q. Judge—who had left New York for India—met us at the station and conducted us to our apartments at 46 Rue Notre Dame des Champs,

which Lady Caithness had hired for us, and H. P. B. occupied, three months. Visitors thronged, and a multitude of questions were asked about our Society and its aims. It had then about 100 Branches or a sixth of its present strength. The Parisian Press, always in search for sensations, gave us many columns of notices ; Victor Hugo's organ, *Le Rappel*, leading off with an article of three columns on " The Buddhist Mission to Europe ".

Our old Albany friends, Dr. and Mrs. Ditson, we found living in Paris, and the Doctor and I went together to see the famous healer, Zouave Jacob, a few days after our arrival. The exceptional healing power of this man was first exhibited during the Second Empire, and the Press of Europe and America teemed for years with stories of his wonders. We were courteously welcomed, M. Jacob saying that he knew me by reputation as a founder of the T. S.. and a healer. He was a spare man of medium size, lithe, active, and full of nervous force, with his hair cut short, black firm eyes, and a black moustache ; he was dressed in black, his frock-coat buttoned, his linen scrupulously clean. He led us to his clinic-room—a long narrow basement chamber, with a bench against the walls all around. On the average he was treating fifty patients a day, and having been at the work twenty years, there must have passed through his rooms some 300,000 patients. I was much struck with his method. At the appointed hour the entrance door would be closed, the patients seated on the benches, and in silence, and with an air of solemnity, the Zouave would enter and take his stand, with arms

folded, at the centre of the lower end near the door. After a moment of meditation, he would raise his head and slowly glance at every patient, letting his eyes rest on every face deliberately and scrutinisingly. Then, beginning with the nearest on his left hand, he would stop in front of him and gaze as if trying to look his body through ; then he would perhaps touch him in some part, or not, as the case might be, and ask : "*Est-ce là ?*" (Is it there ?), and upon receiving the affirmative reply, would give some order, or make a pass or two, or let the hand rest on the affected part, and either let the patient stop, or send him away and pass on to the next. Sometimes, after gazing at a patient, he would shake his head and say : "*Rien ! Allez*," intimating that he could do nothing and the patient should go away. So he would move around the whole room, always silent, grave, impressive ; effecting many cures, rejecting some cases, directing others to return the next day for further treatment, taking no fees, but trusting for his support to sales of his photograph and literature. A striking personality, a rather vain man, bitterly resenting the petty persecutions of the doctors of medicine and the priests, which had followed him throughout his career. I had—it will be remembered—but just completed my fifteen months of healings, and his method greatly impressed me with its efficacy and simplicity. It was pure hypnotic suggestion, and called for no outpouring of the healer's own vitality as mine had done. His impassive calm and mysterious insight into symptoms, the silence maintained, the gliding noiselessly

from patient to patient, the joyful words and expressions of such as were relieved of pains in the sight of all, combined to create a vivid expectancy, which his repute as a great healer intensified, and effected spontaneous cures at the moment when his pointing finger touched the spot of suffering. The one indispensable factor was that he should show in his every motion and whole demeanor a sense of absolute self-confidence as the Master of Pain. It was collective auto-suggestion, the mighty power that helps General Booth and all great revivalists to "convert" their thousands and tens of thousands. In fact, the method of the Salvation Army is one of the most effective hypnotising agencies ever adopted. Last summer I saw it used to perfection by Booth himself in Exeter Hall, and seventy-five subjects drawn by Braid's and Charcot's system to the "anxious bench". The rhythmic pounding of the big drums and swells and falls of the music were identical in potency with that of the tap of the huge tambourines of the Aïssouas in their blood-curdling hypnotic phenomena.

The next day Dr. Ditson and I called on another healer, a spiritualist medium named Eugene Hippolyte, *fils*, who was said to have made many cures under "control". He was a large, sallow-complexioned man, and on testing him, with his consent, I found him quite sensitive to my mesmeric control—a patient whom I could have relieved of almost any functional disorder in two or three treatments. We then paid our respects to still another, M. Adolphe Didier, brother of the very celebrated "Alexis," whose

marvellous clairvoyant faculty is historical. M. Adolphe had only recently resumed residence in Paris after many years spent in London in practice as a medical clairvoyant. He gave me his brother's address and we called on him, but had no opportunity of witnessing a display of his powers.

Meetings for conversation and discussion were being held by H. P. B. and myself at the houses of Lady Caithness and other friends, some of the results of which her ladyship has embodied in her work, *The Mystery of the Ages.*

## CHAPTER VIII

## A STRUGGLE IN THE LONDON LODGE, T.S.

On the 5th of April I left H. P. B. and took the train for London with Mohini M. Chatterji. As a serious dispute had grown up in the London Lodge between Mrs. Anna Kingsford, Mr. Edward Maitland, and their party, on the one hand, and Mr. Sinnett and the rest of the members, on the other, about the comparatively superior value of the Indian teachings as compared with the Christo-Egyptian teachings which she was giving out, and as it lay with me to settle it or see the members divided into two camps, as it were, I had issued from Nice a circular to each registered member of the London Lodge, asking them to send me, separately, to Paris, in confidence, their views respectively on the situation. These letters I had brought with me to read in the train. I had just come to a passage in the letter of Bertram Keightley, where he affirmed his entire confidence that the Masters would order all things well, when, from the roof of the railway carriage, above Mohini's head, a letter came fluttering down. It proved to be addressed to me and to be in the K. H. handwriting, giving me necessary advice for the treatment of the difficulty. It was as if intended as a marked response

to the loyal thought of the writer of the letter I was reading at the moment. I wish that everybody in the Society could realise how certain it is that those Great Brothers who are behind our work keep a vigilant eye upon all of us who with a pure heart and unselfish mind throw our energies into it. What more comforting than to know that our labors are not in vain nor our aspirations unheeded?

The trouble in our London Lodge, like all such misunderstandings, tended to increase and ultimately to disrupt the once harmonious group. It was imperative that I should put a stop to it, if possible, and this was my principal business in going over to London. If I had had the least doubt of it before, it would have been dispelled by a letter which I received phenomenally in my cabin on board the "Shannon," the day before we reached Brindisi, and in which it was said:

"Put all needed restraint upon your feelings, so that you may do the right thing in this Western imbroglio. Watch your first impressions. The mistakes you make are from failure to do this. Let neither your personal predilections, affections, suspicions, nor antipathies affect your action. Misunderstandings have grown up between Fellows, both in London and Paris, which imperil the interests of the movement . . . try to remove such misconceptions as you will find, by kind persuasion and an appeal to the feeling of loyalty to the cause of truth, if not to us. Make *all* these men feel that we have no favorites, nor affections for

persons, but only for their good acts and for humanity as a whole."

A great truth was stated in this same letter, *viz.*: "one of the most valuable effects of Upasika's (H. P. B.'s) mission is that it drives men to self-study, and destroys in them blind servility to persons." What a pity that some of her most ardent disciples could not have realised this, for they would have been spared the bitter pain that has been caused them and all of us by the many successful exposures of her defects of character, by opponents who accepted their foolish challenge and proved her to be the reverse of infallible. She was great enough and had quite sufficient claims upon our gratitude, without our trying to make of her a goddess, immaculate and unerring.

In the London struggle in our Branch I had to deal with a learned, clever, self-confident woman, ambitious and eccentric: a unique personality, who believed herself the angel of a new religious epoch, the reincarnation of Hermes, Joan of Arc, and other historic characters. By canvassing the opinions of all the registered members of the London Lodge, T.S., I had ascertained that as between her teachings and those of the Indian sages, the verdict was almost unanimous against her. It was not that they did not appreciate her great qualities as they deserved, but that they valued those of the Masters more. Perhaps, also, they found her inclined to be too masterful for British notions. The first step was naturally to call on her, which I did. I cannot say I altogether liked

her, although it did not take many minutes for me to gauge her intellectual power and the breadth of her culture. There was something uncanny to me in her views about human affection. She said she had never felt love for a human being ; that people had told her, before her child was born, to wait its appearance and she would feel the great gush of mother-love and the fountains of her affection would be unsealed : she had waited, the child had been shown her, but her only feeling was the wish that they should take it away out of her sight! Yet she lavished excessive love on a guinea-pig, and, in his *Life of Anna Kingsford*, Mr. Maitland's splendid pen has made us all see, as in a mental Kinematograph, his great colleague carrying the little beast around with her in her travels, lavishing on it her caresses, and keeping the anniversary of its death as one does that of a near relative.

The annual election of officers by the London Lodge was to come off on the following day, so I had no time to lose. I made Mrs. Kingsford the offer to give her a charter for a separate Branch of her own, to be called The Hermetic T.S., first having discussed it with Mr. C. C. Massey, her sincere friend and mine. The offer was accepted, and the election passed off harmoniously ; Mr. G. B. Finch being chosen President, Mr. Sinnett, Vice-President and Secretary, and Miss Arundale, Treasurer. Things were proceeding smoothly, in the usual manner, when they were interrupted by the sensational appearance of H. P. B., whom I had left in Paris, but who took a flying trip so as to be present at this meeting. The Kingsford-Maitland party, who had notified me in advance that they

would not be candidates for re-election to office in the London Lodge, T. S., presented me, before leaving, a formal application for a charter for the new Branch, which I promised to grant. On the 9th (April) the meeting for organisation was held at the chambers of Mr. Massey, and the "Hermetic Lodge, T. S." became an established fact. Besides Mr. Kingsford, Mr. Maitland, Mr. Kirby, and Mr. Massey, there were present Lady Wilde, her sons Oscar and William, and the wife and daughters of the late Dr. Keneally, the erudite and eccentric counsel of the noted Claimant. These three ladies applied for, and were admitted into, membership. Mohini M. Chatterji accompanied me, and made one of the excellent addresses on the occasion.

On the Easter Sunday I went with Miss Arundale and Mohini to Westminster Abbey to hear a preacher of high repute, and then to the Central Hall and Barracks of the Salvation Army. We all gave the palm to Mrs. Booth and the other speakers who followed her, over the stately and soulless inanity of the fashionable Abbey priest, whose discourse had not warmth enough in it to vitalise an amœba, whereas those of the others boiled over with fervor. The kingdom of Heaven will never be carried in white bands and cassocks, unless the man they hide be a bit more like "flames of fire" than like a boxful of dictionary words and rhetorical phrases.

The change from the tropical heat of India to the bitter winds and damp days and nights of London, and the lack of warm clothing, laid me up with a pleuritic cold for two or three days, and might have

been more serious but for the unselfish care of Mrs. and Miss Arundale, my hostesses, who were kindness personified. Out again on the 16th, I was given a dinner at the Junior Athenæum Club by Mr. W. H. Coffin, of the Society for Psychical Research. He had bidden to meet me Messrs. W. Crookes, F.R.S.; Prof. W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E.; Col. Hartley, LL.D.; H. J. Hood; A. P. Sinnett; F. Podmore, M.A.; Edward Pease; Rev. Dr. Taefel; F. W. H. Myers; and Edmund Gurney. Truly a brilliant company of scholars and literati! This was in the early pre-Coulombian days, when the Theosophical Society had not been declared *taboo*, and H. P. B. had not been branded by the S. P. R. as the most accomplished and dangerous charlatan of the present world-period!

On the 17th Mohini and I visited the laboratory of Mr. Crookes, and were shown a variety of most interesting experiments. The next day we two and Mr. Sinnett dined at a private house, where Mohini saw for the first time a lady partisan of the Esthetic Reform movement, dressed in the utterly absurd style of costume affected by that body of cranks, and having her hair tousled, like a rat's nest, all over her head, and far too much of her bust exposed to suit our Hindu's notions of decency. As luck would have it, she was given to Mohini to take in to dinner. He glanced at me hopelessly, not knowing what was expected of him, with a strange expression of eye that I could not make out and had no time to inquire into at the moment. When we were driving home, later, in the cab, the mystery was explained in a way that was nearly the death of me. "That lady that I took

in to dinner," said he, "does she sometimes get dangerous?" "Dangerous? What do you mean?" I replied. "Why, she is insane, isn't she? She must be. She asked me at the table if we ever laughed in India! It was when you were telling that comical story, at which they all roared. The fact is, I kept my eyes all the while fixed on my plate, lest by catching hers I might send her off into a paroxysm and she might use one of the knives beside her plate: how *could* I laugh? Don't you think it was inhospitable in them to put such a lady in my charge without telling me what to do in case a fit should come on?" He said this in perfect sincerity, and stared in astonishment when I burst into fits of laughter; which made it worse than ever for me. He was much relieved when I at last was able to explain matters, and assured me that he thought the lady was a mad relative of the family, who was, perhaps, harmless, ordinarily, but subject to recurrent crises of the nerves, and was "allowed to dress like that to keep her quiet".

My Diary shows that the making of the "Hermetic" group did not quite settle the disturbance in the old Lodge. The members generally wanted to profit by both courses of instruction and to belong to both Lodges. The effect was to keep up the excitement, so I was obliged to issue a new rule, to the effect that multiple membership would not be allowed; no person to be an active member in more than one Branch simultaneously; and where double membership existed, choice should be made in which group the individual preferred to remain. The effect was to threaten the disruption of

the "Hermetic" Lodge. So, after consultations with Mr. Massey, I suggested that Mrs. Kingsford should return her charter and form her friends into an independent society, and thus make it feasible for them to belong to both. For, the Hermetic being an outside body, its relation to us would be the same as that of the Asiatic, Geographical, Astronomical, or any other foreign society. Mrs. Kingsford returning a favorable answer through Mr. Massey, this plan was carried into effect, the Hermetic Lodge of the T. S. ceased to exist, and the "Hermetic Society" was born, with Mrs. Kingsford as President and Mr. Maitland as Vice-President. Calm followed the storm and all went well. The first meeting was held on May 9th, and, by request, I made a friendly address of good wishes and sympathy for the new society.

The interest in Theosophical ideas was now spreading throughout all London social circles. Virtually begun by the publication of Mr. Sinnett's *The Occult World*—of which the late Mr. Sam. Ward gave away 250 copies among his friends—it had been fostered by a number of agencies, literary and social, and one could pretty well foresee the extension that has since occurred. A number of persons of high standing in the world of letters, as well as in the nobility, joined us. I had my full share of dinners to eat in company with social lions, some of whom impressed me most amiably—others didn't. At Mrs. Tennant's house I met Sir Edwin Arnold, was invited to lunch with him, and he gave me the valuable present of some pages of the original manuscript of *The Light of Asia*, which is now one of

the curios of the Adyar Library. At Mrs. Bloomfield Moore's Mr. Sinnett and I met Robert Browning, and talked some Theosophy with that master of verse. Earl Russell had me up to Oxford for a night, and Lord Borthwick, F.T.S., to his place in Scotland for a fortnight. At one table I met an officer of the Queen's Household and a famous General ; at another, one of the greatest of modern painters. Everywhere the theme of talk was Theosophy : the tide was rising. The ebb was to follow, but as yet no one foresaw it in Europe, for it was to begin at Madras : the Scottish Missionaries its engineers, the high-minded Coulombs their tools. We shall come to that chapter of history very soon now, as we are recalling the incidents of the month of April, 1884, and the grand explosion occurred only a few weeks later.

## CHAPTER IX

## H. P. B. AND THE S. P. R. REPORT

Two distinct and very different streams of the Society's Karma were now converging, though we then realised very little their prospective importance. One was the outcome of my special mission for the Ceylon Buddhists, which had brought me to Europe this year ; the other, our first contact with the Society for Psychical Research. The former, beneficent in itself, brought honor to us and joy to a whole nation ; the latter cast a disrepute upon the S. P. R., caused us undeserved grief and sorrow, tarnished our reputation, and pierced the heart of that unrewarded servant of the race, H. P. B. In the sequence of events it comes first, and shall have first attention.

There had been the making of acquaintances between us and the S. P. R. ; entire cordiality and unsuspicious friendliness on our part ; an equally apparent sympathy on theirs ; agreeable social meetings at the houses of their leaders ; and, finally, a consent on my part to be examined by a Committee of the S. P. R. The sky was purely blue, without the tiniest cloud to indicate the hurricane in preparation for us. So those were joyous days in London and Paris, and H. P. B. and I were in exuberant spirits. On 11th May (1884) I had my first sitting and examination with Messrs. F. W. H. Myers and

J. Herbert Stack. A stenographer reported the Questions and Answers. The printed Report is in a pamphlet of 130 pp. 8vo. (Private and confidential to members of the S. P. R.), which was issued in December, 1884, and which also contains reports of similar examinations by the Committee of Mohini M. Chatterji, and forty-two documentary appendices. The ground covered by the inquiry was as to the appearance of phantasms of the living; the projection and material constitution of the human Double; appearances and communication with the same at distances from the physical body; visits to the witnesses from living Adepts or Mahatmas; *apports* of ponderable objects; astral bell-sounds; the phenomenal receipt of written documents; the precipitation of Mahatmic writing within closed letters from ordinary correspondents while in transit through the mails; the giving of flowers by an Adept's double to a group of observers, etc. I think that any candid reader of the Report will notice the perfect candor, openness, and evident good faith of the witnesses, and the amplitude of corroboration contained in the documents which were laid by us before the Committee. But to understand our feelings when, later on, the S. P. R. made its merciless attack upon H. P. B., our Masters, and ourselves, one should try to put oneself in our places. Here were we laying bare a series of personal experiences which had for us a most private and sacred character, for no possible benefit that could accrue to ourselves, but solely that our testimony might help the cause of spiritual science and give comfort to other students not yet so favored

as ourselves; going before the Committee with no prepared case, but answering the questions sprung upon us, and hence putting ourselves at the mercy of those who had none of our enthusiasm, whose policy was to criticise, analyse, and pick flaws in our statements, and who in rendering their final judgment were unsparing of our feelings, sceptical as to our motives, and merciless to a degree. Worst of all, they were then incompetent through inexperience of psychical laws, misled by the conclusions of an agent—Dr. Hodgson—whom they sent out to India to verify our statements and collect evidence, and by an utterly incompetent handwriting expert's report, and so put themselves on permanent record as the self-righteous calumniators of a woman—H. P. B.—who had neither done an injury to a living person, nor asked or received any benefit or reward for her services to the world, yet whom they dared to brand as "one of the most accomplished, ingenious, and interesting impostors in history" (see *Report of the Committee appointed to investigate phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society.* Members: Messrs. E. Gurney, F. W. H. Myers, F. Podmore, H. Sidgwick, and J. H. Stack. Published in 1885).

This Second Report was received by poor H. P. B. at Adyar when she lay apparently on her death-bed, and it nearly killed her. With an agony of pathos she has written in blue pencil, in the copy that now lies before me, the following:

"Madame Blavatsky, who will soon be dead and gone, for she is doomed, says this to her friends of

the P. R. S. (S. P. R.): After my death these phenomena, which are the direct cause of my premature death, will take place better than ever. But whether dead or alive, I will be ever imploring my friends and Brothers never to make them public; never to sacrifice their rest, their honor, to satisfy public curiosity or the empty pretext of science. Read the book. Never, throughout my long and sad life, never was there so much of uncalled for, contemptuous suspicion and contempt lavished upon an innocent woman as I find here in these few pages published by so-called friends.

"H. P. BLAVATSKY

"ADYAR, *Feb.* 5, 1885,

"on my death-bed."

She adds the remark that she shall never forgive me for "thrusting our phenomena upon the attention of the gentlemen scientists of the P. R. S. (S. P. R.)," which was rather hard on me, considering the innocent part I played in the whole affair. I knew of nothing to be concealed, had no suspicion whatever of bad faith anywhere, and was perfectly willing to put every facility in the way of those who wished to investigate the facts. This is conclusively shown in Dr. Hodgson's Report on his investigations in India, as the special agent of the S. P. R. On page 311, he says of me: "His candor was shown by his readiness in providing me with extracts from his own diary, and the freedom with which he allowed me to inspect important documents in his possession; and

he rendered me every assistance in his power in the way of my acquiring the evidence of the native witnesses. Not only so, but observing, as I thought, that Mr. Damodar was unduly endeavoring to take part in my examination of a witness, shortly after I arrived in India, he desired me not to hesitate in taking the witnesses apart for my private examination, and he made special arrangements for my convenience."

Now there are several points not to be overlooked in finally revising the wholesale condemnation of Madame Blavatsky and the discrediting of her phenomena by Dr. Hodgson and his colleagues of the S. P. R. :

1. No prepared case was submitted to the Committee in London, Mr. Sinnett, Mr. Mohini, and I having come forward and answered questions impromptu, according to our best recollections about events stretching back over several years. When the incidents occurred there had been no measuring by feet and inches, consulting of watches, tying up of H. P. B. in a bag or fastening her to chairs by sealed threads, as in the case of mediums; nor did either of us think for one moment of daring to banter with the august Personages in momentary view, or to tell them to move here, or stand there, or let themselves be weighed or handled or pinched, to satisfy us that they were real. I have never heard of anybody's so treating any saintly personage. So we simply made ourselves the easy game of a Committee who cared not a whit about our feelings, motives, or opinions as to the Living Teachers, but concerned themselves chiefly in trying

to break down the standing of the great rival Society, and sweeping our rubbish off the ground which they aimed at occupying alone. This is the tone that seems to run through the whole Report.

2. That when, later on, in India, they cross-examined the Hindu and other Indian witnesses who had signed the certificates published in the *Theosophist*, in Mr. A. O. Hume's *Hints on Esoteric Theosophy* and other pamphlets, every stress was laid upon their contradictions, while no allowance whatever was made for (*a*) the utter inexperience of Asiatics in psychical research methods, and (*b*) their mental incompetency to restate accurately what had been their observations and impressions at the time of witnessing the phenomena, when no tests had been applied, measurements taken, or other details looked to : since nobody had had an idea that they would have to recall the incidents four or five or even more years later. A judicially-minded investigator would have seen at a glance that self-contradictions would, under those circumstances, have been the most natural, and mnemonic accuracy the least so, to expect. Every cool observer at mediumistic circles would know that. I have attended the late Dale Owen, Epes Sargent, and other equally honest and cultured men, to circles where they proved to me their perfect inaccuracy of observation. How much less, then, ought to have been expected from Hindus who had never had the least personal experience in such matters ?

3. The chief accuser of Madame Blavatsky was Mme. Emma Coulomb, whose moral worth is shown in her confession to the Missionaries that she had

been cognisant of the fraudulent character of H. P. B 's phenomena all along, and had served as her lying and dishonest accomplice ! Inquiries at Cairo, of the ladies of the Royal harem, would yield highly interesting facts about her.

4. That the pretended letters of H. P. B. to her were *never shown me by anybody*, although I was within easy reach, a fact which does not go towards proving their genuineness.

5. That the unqualified opinion of the caligraphic expert who declared the K. H. and other alleged Mahatmic letters to have been written by H. P. B. (from certain resemblances between them and her admitted handwriting), upon which the S. P. R. Committee largely based their denunciation of her, is that of a man notorious for having declared, on like professional analyses, the " Pigot Forgeries " to have been genuine letters of Mr. Parnell, while the forger himself later killed himself in prison after confessing to his forgeries. Moreover, his professional opinion is opposed to the categorically opposite one of the chief caligraphist of the High Court of Berlin. Letters of H. P. B. and of the Mahatma K. H. were submitted for his decision by Herr G. Gebhard, Persian Consul, and he declared in writing that " it was impossible that the two letters could have been written by the same hand " (*Theosophist*, June, 1886, Supplement).

6. That even if the resemblances in the handwritings to Madame Blavatsky's had been much more striking than they were, this would have been no proof of her *mala fides*, since every tyro in spiritualistic

research knows that, whether a psychic message is written on a closed slate, or precipitated on a paper or card laid on the floor, or on the ceiling, or anywhere else at a distance from the medium, the writing will usually resemble that of the medium. The same rule applies to all intermediary agents through whom messages in psychic writing are transmitted. Neither Dr. Hodgson, nor either of his colleagues, nor their infallible "expert" seems to have known this elementary fact; yet this did not deter them from rendering an unjust and cruel judgment on a woman whom they almost seem to have fallen upon to claw to pieces, like so many wolves on a victim's carcase. I wish to keep my feelings within bounds, but it becomes very hard when I think of the injustice done to my old colleague. The attitude of the Committee of the S. P. R. seems to me that of a body of gifted, scholarly men, blinded by self-righteousness so as to make them incapable of seeing facts as they were, and daring to lay violent hands upon the reputation of a person entitled, under every principle of human justice, to the benefit of the doubt.[1] Was any mercy shown her

[1] The character of Mr. Podmore has been just recently drawn by the veteran Editor of *Light* (see issue of November 27th, 1897), in a way that will show how little chance of fair treatment H. P. B. had at the hands of his S. P. R. Committee. "Patient, unspeakably painstaking, with a wonderful eye for a crevice, and an equally wonderful wrist for jerking an incident off the rails, and putting an up-train on the down line . . . Mr. Podmore is an enthusiastic unbeliever. He starts with a vehement assumption against all things spiritual, and strictly attends to business as one whose business is to detect crevices, and stuff them up with anything that comes to hand: and if there is nothing substantial to

One searches in vain throughout the published *Report* for the smallest sign of it.

> Oh ! for the rarity
> Of Christian charity.

7. That Dr. Hodgson, the agent-detective sent by the S. P. R. to India to ferret out the facts, has since then become an avowed spiritualist, to the extent of pronouncing the medium, Mrs. Piper's phenomena, spiritualistic after six years' scrutiny of them ! In his earlier days he devoted fourteen hours to the writing up of a single slate-writing séance—*i.e.*, at the time when he was as sceptical and incompetent to pronounce upon "psychic powers" as is Mr. Podmore to this day. It is sad to think what a different report on H. P. B.'s phenomena he would have made to the S. P. R. but for his incompetence as an observer of psychic facts ; sad, because he might then have done her justice instead of injustice, and spared her years of agony undeserved. The congeniality of Dr. Hodgson's mind at that time with Mr. Podmore's is apparent throughout his report of observations : a single example will suffice—*ex uno disce omnes*. Mr. S. Ramaswamier, District Registrar of Tinnevelly, Madras Presidency, encountered in Sikkim my Guru, Mahatma M., on horseback, and had a long conversation with him, which he describes at length

stuff them up with, he jams in an unfailing supply of innuendos, assertions, and assumptions. But a passage, towards the end of the book [under review] gives us the key to it all . . . 'We are bound to assume abnormality somewhere, and, of the two, it may be easier to suppose the medium abnormally dishonest than to credit him with abnormal psychic powers.' "

(*Theosophist*, December, 1882). Dr. Hodgson says: "I see no improbability in supposing that the Mahatma was personated by one of Madame Blavatsky's confederates." As though this penniless woman had a paid army of cheats scattered over India, even to Sikkim!

8. That weird phenomena occurred in H. P. B.'s presence from her very childhood, as is proved by the testimony of her family, and that similar ones were witnessed by myself and many other persons in America and India, long before the Coulombs came out of their obscurity, and under circumstances precluding the theory of confederacy or bad faith.[1] This fact should, it would seem, have great weight in the making up of the public verdict in the case at issue. The misfortune was that the S. P. R. Committee, owing to ignorance and lack of experience, doubted the possibility of such phenomena, and hence—as Mr. Podmore puts it in the passage above quoted—as they had "to assume abnormality somewhere," it was "easier to suppose the medium abnormally dishonest than to credit him with abnormal psychic powers".

If the reader will but think a moment, he will see how impossible it was that the members of the committee could have been qualified to pronounce upon phenomena of the class of H. P. B.'s. There had been plenty of mediums in Europe and America, but no alleged adept proficients in

[1] See OLD DIARY LEAVES, "The True History of the Theosophical Society," London, New York, and Madras, 1895 [First Series].

psychical science since Cagliostro and Count St. Germain. Where is the record of verified phenomena with which H. P. B.'s could be compared and tested? In the whole range of scientific research no branch demands of the experimenter such intuitive insight, such capacity for delicate weighing of facts, such a profound knowledge of man in his physical, mental, and spiritual aspects, such an intimate acquaintance with the ancient schools of philosophy and of occultism, such a memory of the recorded powers of adepts, such a power to experimentally verify at first hand the number and play of the finer forces of nature, as this field of transcendental physics. What were the special qualifications, then, of Messrs. Myers, Gurney, Podmore, Stack, Sidgwick, and Hodgson for this inquest? What weight ought to be given to their hasty verdict? We scorn the raw opinions of the uneducated tradesman upon astronomy, mathematics, symbology, spirit survival, or any other of the great questions of human knowledge with which he has had no familiarity whatever. Yet is his case worse than that of these gentlemen amateurs in Practical Psychology, who possessed no more qualification to render a just judgment on H. P. B.'s psychical powers than our supposed green-grocer, tailor, or blacking-maker? If the S. P. R. had had to convert the public to a belief that ran counter to its preconceptions, or to some new aspect of a fixed error, such as the geocentric theory, for example, does any sane man believe that they would have brought forward so weak a case as this, and so hastily risked the indignant censure of a more enlightened posterity?

But the chance of discrediting a dangerous personality, by merely calling her a clever impostor and thus appealing to popular ignorance and popular prejudice, was too tempting to be resisted ; so they slandered and passed on, leaving their poisoned shaft to rankle in the breast of this poor, race-loving, imprudent, impulsive thaumaturgist and teacher. They have had their day of triumph, but divine justice has still its inexorable policy to vindicate.

Whatever her other friends may have done, I, at least, have always tried to deal with H. P. B. as a natural, not a supernatural, personage. In relating my observations of her phenomena I have done my best to speak the plain truth and present my facts without bias. This policy has been adhered to in the face of the resistance of many of my colleagues who would have liked to cover up her weaknesses. What they might think of me was of no consequence whatsoever ; I had my duty to do to my benefactress, friend, and co-founder of the Society. I have done it all the better, I believe, by telling the truth, adding nothing pleasant, concealing nothing unpleasant. I have taken H. P. B. as a being of different sides of character, some almost angelic, others the reverse. Often, when on lecturing tours in far-away lands, I have been asked what I had to say in defence of her against the charges of the Coulombs and Hodgson. My answer has always been that the case against her had never been judicially presented, but very crudely and in an unconvincing way ; that I myself had seen so many of her phenomena produced under circumstances of an unimpeachable

character, as to make me know that she was a great adept in handling nature's occult forces ; but that, even if one had to accept as proven every charge brought against her phenomena, she was still a benefactress of mankind in the teachings she had left behind, and had won the fervent gratitude of thousands of men and women to whom her writings had first shown the path up the hill of spiritual truth. And I have challenged my questioners to tell the audience whether they or any other of Mme. Blavatsky's flippant accusers dare claim the right to a tithe of the love and gratitude given her by the public, for what *they* had done for humanity. I never yet failed to win the applause of my hearers. For there is beneath all social movements, down in the heart of human nature, a passionate love of fair-play, and this will vindicate the now besmirched reputation of Helena Petrovna. In short, all of us instinctively believe in Karma. As for the victim of the S. P. R., she is beyond their reach, and can smile at their most malicious attempts to do her harm. Her Karma thrust her under this crushing burden of sorrow, but the ordeal is past, and she can now

> Know how sublime a thing it is
> To suffer and be strong.

## CHAPTER X

## SUCCESSFUL ISSUE OF BUDDHIST MISSION

TURNING our backs upon the tragical episode of the attack of the S. P. R. upon Madame Blavatsky and her associates, we will now take up the pleasanter task of recalling, for permanent record, in greater detail than was given in Chapter VI, the incidents of the Buddhistic commission with which the Sinhalese nation had honored me, and which had brought me to London in the spring of 1884. The events preceding this action are historically so important, and their consequences have been so serious, that I feel it a duty to expand the brief narrative above mentioned, and to quote, from the original documents in my possession, facts that must otherwise go unrecorded. My duty was, as above stated, to lay before the Colonial Office certain grievances for which no redress had been obtained in Ceylon. They struck at the very root of the principle of religious neutrality, so clearly and so wisely announced by Her Majesty, the Queen, as the future policy of her Government throughout her dominions. Of course, the British Empire would not hold together under any other system than the absolute guarantee to all the followers of the various religions under its sway, of the right of private judgment as to their creeds and of personal freedom as to their forms

of worship. When the Portuguese conquered the Maritime Provinces of Ceylon, they adopted the opposite policy and employed the brutal agencies of the sword, fire, confiscation, and rapine to compel the mild and inoffensive people of the Island to adopt the Christian religion, but without avail. The poor creatures saw their houses burnt, their females dishonored, and their friends put to the sword, but they only fled to the jungles and clung to Buddhism. Under the rule of the Dutch, who supplanted the Portuguese, the same stress was put upon them, but by chiefly legal enactments and appeal to selfish motives, rather than by military cruelty. Cruel enough, though, were some of their laws as, for instance, the denial of legitimacy to children born in lawful Buddhistic wedlock and of their right of inheritance, unless the parents were married in a Christian church : an infamous bit of cunning. A Jubilee Report of the C. M. Society, noticing the past and then present state of the Christian Churches in Ceylon, says that these harsh measures of the Dutch bred "Christians"—*i.e.*, hypocrites—prolifically, and when the British drove out the Dutch and conquered the Maritime Provinces, the church registers bore the names of thousands of this sort of Christians, but within a brief time after the proclamation of religious freedom was made, "the flourishing tree was wilted as though stricken by a black frost". I quote the substance of this avowal from memory, but I think I am fairly accurate.

However warlike the Sinhalese of the seaboard may have been in the far past, the fight has all been

drawn out of them by three centuries of foreign rule [1]; yet its potentiality is always there, according to the law of sociological evolution, and it only needs the right concatenation of circumstances to set their passions ablaze again. On Easter Day, 1883, a crisis occurred which, under less wise self-restraint in the leaders of the Buddhist community, might have caused serious riots and blood-shed. If the leaders had not been under what we may call the conservative training of membership in the Theosophical Society, which had taught them the benefit of union and patient persistence in the conduct of public movements, the masses might have broken loose and taken that Lynch law redress for their wrongs which they could not get from a vacillating Governor and unsympathetic officials. Briefly, the facts were that on the Easter Day a procession of peaceful, unarmed Buddhist worshippers was passing through the streets of Colombo to Kotahena, a suburb where one of their most revered temples is situate, to make the customary offerings of flowers, fruits, and other things at the shrine, when they were assaulted violently by a large mob. To quote from the Petition laid before the Governor: "They were murderously assaulted by a mob of Roman Catholics and other evilly-disposed rioters, who bore painted upon their persons the sign of a cross, who had inflamed their passions by intoxicant drinks, and who were armed with bludgeons, sharp weapons, and other deadly

[1] The Portuguese held the seaboard for 153 years; the Dutch, from A.D. 1658 to 1795, when the British expelled them and made themselves a present of the sovereignty. "In the interests of Christianity and civilisation," of course!

instruments ; that in the affray which followed, the lives of women and children were imperilled, great bodily harm was done to a number of Buddhists, five head of cattle drawing their carts were slaughtered in the Queen's highway, and the carts themselves, with their valuable contents, were consumed by fire." It goes on to state that a Buddhist named Juan Naide was murdered, the Police looking on without interfering ; that the mob was collected by the ringing of tocsins on the bells of the Catholic churches, and that certain noted persons were seen by the Police painting white crosses on the dark-skinned bodies of the rioters, organising the attack, and giving them liquors. Although these outrages were witnessed by thousands, and the leaders were all well known, no action was taken by the authorities, and it was but too evident that the whole thing was to be ignored. After waiting some days, the leaders of the Buddhist community, taking counsel together, brought a criminal action against certain suspected parties, with such proofs as, without Police help, could be discovered. The Justice of the Peace recommended that twelve of the accused should be committed for trial, but the Acting Queen's Advocate, acting in violation of the "Ordnance (Ord., XI of 1868) and of the settled policy of British justice, the sitting Justice of the Peace was obliged, under instructions of the Acting Queen's Advocate, to assume the functions of the Supreme Court, and, without trial by jury, to decide the validity of the complaint and the value of the testimony offered by the accused . . . Thus, then, as events proved, the ordinary course of

justice was interrupted and the accused were released . . ." "The result being," says the Petition, "that, notwithstanding we have spent Rs. 5,000 in legal and other expenses to secure justice, the murderers of an unoffending Buddhist are unpunished, no recompense has been given for property destroyed, to the value of some Rs. 4,000, and the whole body of Sinhalese Buddhists . . . are left to face the possibility of similar bloody attacks in future by the various enemies of their religion . . . So serious has the agitation upon this subject already become, that, but for the remonstrances of counsel, ten thousand Buddhists would have presented this petition in person to your Excellency; and a committee of our influential men have, in despair, taken the preliminary steps to ask of the Home Government and the Commons of England such help as may be practicable to redress their wrongs and give full effect in future to the assurances of religious neutrality in Her Majesty's Asiatic dominions which have, from time to time, in the Royal name been solemnly pledged."

Things went from bad to worse. The Buddhists, smarting under a sense of their wrongs, and goaded by the jeers and taunts of the unpunished rioters, were getting ripe for bloody reprisals. Government had not turned over a finger to right them in more than a year. In short, there was a crisis that menaced the destruction of law and order.

The first thing that occurred to the Buddhist leaders in their time of worst trouble was, as stated in Chapter VI, to telegraph me an urgent request

to come over and help them. Accepting, as in duty bound, I crossed *via* Tuticorin and reached Colombo on Sunday, 27th January, 1884. I went straight to Sumangala's College and organised a meeting of leading Buddhists. The next day I got them to form a Buddhist Defence Committee, with old Mr. Goonewardene, Mohandiram, as Chairman, Don Carolis, as Vice, H. A. Fernando as Treasurer, and C. P. Goonewardene as Secretary; that is to say, all most respected persons in the community. They elected me an Honorary Member, as the following extract shows:

"At the suggestion of the High Priest, and upon the motion of Mr. Don Carolis, seconded by Mr. H. A. Fernando, and supported by Mr. J. P. Jayatilleke, it was unanimously

"Resolved, that Colonel H. S. Olcott, of Madras, be respectfully requested to generally assist the Committee to carry out the objects of its organisation.

"And that provided he consent, he be made an Honorary Member, and asked to proceed to London as the Chief Agent of the Committee, with full power to represent it under any circumstances that may arise, and in its name and that of the Sinhalese Buddhists in general, to ask for such redress and enter into such engagements as may appear to him judicious."

The next day I went to Kandy to personally confer with the new Governor, Sir Arthur Gordon, who had just succeeded Sir James R. Longden, the Feeble.

I found him quite another sort of person, and from his intelligent grasp of the situation felt much encouragement for our case. He promised to forward immediately to London any papers we might wish to lay before the Colonial Office, and altogether expressed his sympathy with our party under the afflicting circumstances. Messrs. Wm. de Abrew and Goonesekara accompanied me to the interview. These preliminaries being satisfactorily settled, we returned to Colombo on the next day.

At the College I held, on the following day, a private conference with the High Priests, Sumangala, Dhammalankara, Subhuti, and Weligama, who, among other things, joined in giving me a written commission to accept, in their names, any persons, in Europe or elsewhere, who might wish to formally declare themselves Buddhists. The ranking High Priests of Malwatte and Asgiri, the Royal Temples at Kandy, had given me similar powers already. Having done all that was possible in Ceylon, I returned that evening to India, to arrange affairs at Adyar and make as early a start as possible for London.

The idea of H. P. B.'s accompanying me to Europe was an afterthought, it having been decided in a Council meeting after I had foreseen that I would have to go to London for the settlement of the Ceylon business.

H. P. B., taking time by the forelock, preceded me to Bombay so as to make a promised visit to our colleague, the late Thakur of Wadhwan.

On the 15th of February I left for Bombay with Mr. St. George Lane-Fox, F.T.S., and on the 18th

was rejoined by H. P. B., Dr. Hartmann, and Mohini, who had extended their Kathiawar trip as far as Sihor, to visit our always beloved and loyal colleague, Prince Harisinhji Rupsinhji. On the 20th, at noon, we sailed for Marseilles on the s.s. "Chandernagore," of one of the French lines, receiving demonstrations of affection from a large number of friends who came, with the usual bouquets and flower-wreaths, to see us off.

The particulars of our delightful voyage, our arrival at Marseilles and Nice, the incidents which occurred while we were the guests of Lady Caithness, our arrival at Paris, my leaving H. P. B. there and proceeding on to London with Mohini, the settlement of the teapot tempest in the London Lodge, and the melancholy results of our intercourse with the S. P. R., have been recorded above. We will now resume the thread of our narrative of the results of my Buddhist mission.

A long familiarity with the methods of public business as followed in governmental departments restrained me from hurrying to the Colonial Secretary's antechamber with my papers in my hand. Instead of committing that indiscretion, which has caused so many aspirants for official favor to spend weeks and months outside the door behind which the great man sits, I made it my first business to find out how the business of the Colonial Office was transacted, which bureau had special charge of Ceylon affairs, and what was the character of the gentleman in charge of it. These inquiries—which, of course, I might have completed in an hour had I been so fortunate as to meet with the right man—took up a

fortnight. Seeing at last my way clear, I called at the Colonial Office and sent in my card to the Hon. R. H. Meade. Mr. Meade received me with the utmost politeness, and showed himself entirely familiar with the details of our case. He was good enough to enlighten me about the forms of correspondence used in the British public offices, and I addressed to Lord Derby the following letter:

77 ELGIN CRESCENT W.,
LONDON, *the* 17*th May*, 1884.

To

THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL OF DERBY,
*Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

MY LORD:

1. The despatch of the 18th of February of H. E. Sir Arthur Gordon to your Lordship will have informed you of my having come to London as the representative of the Sinhalese Buddhists, to obtain redress for the gross wrongs done them in connection with the riots of Easter Sunday last year.

2. I have personally conferred with the Hon. R. H. Meade of the Colonial Office with respect to the matter, and now have the honor to ask your Lordship's consideration of the enclosures herewith forwarded, copies of which are not on file in the office. They are:

3. A copy of an official report of a meeting of Sinhalese Buddhists held at Colombo on the 28th day of January, 1882, to consider the present state of Buddhism in the Island of Ceylon, and adopt such

measures as may be necessary for obtaining redress for certain grievances.

4. Copy of a letter and appeal to H. E. Sir Arthur Gordon, Governor of Ceylon, asking him to take certain specified lawful steps to secure redress for the Buddhists : the writer being Edward F. Perera, Esq., leading Proctor for the Buddhists in the late riot proceedings. To which letter, although written and delivered to its addressee on the 5th of February, no response had, I believe, been received up to the most recent dates from the Island.

5. Extracts from a private letter to myself from Mr. J. R. De Silva, one of the best and most intelligent Buddhists of Ceylon, and the gentleman who was Secretary to the meeting for forming the Defence Committee named in the Document ; the information showing the despairing state of feeling with regard to the prospect of getting justice from Government unless my present mission should succeed.

6. I have also shown to Mr. Meade a copy of a Colombo paper, which sets forth the unlimited power habitually enjoyed by the second law officer of the crown—the local official primarily responsible, as alleged, for the apparent miscarriage of justice complained of.

7. That your Lordship may know what the Sinhalese people hope for as measures of justice, I would state that I am asked to beg your consideration of the following points :

(*a*) That the Attorney-General of Ceylon[1] be instructed, if not illegal, to order the parties accused

[1] The title of the Queen's Advocate under the New Code.

of the guilt of the Easter Riot and of its consequences to be committed for trial.

(*b*) That, either by extending the terms of the Imperial Indian Proclamation of religious neutrality by the British Government, or otherwise, some absolute guarantee of their religious rights and privileges shall be at once given the Sinhalese Buddhists, so that the prevailing inquietude may be done away with, and all officials be made to feel that Her Majesty's Government will hold them to stern account should they henceforth fail in the impartial performance of duty.

(*c*) That the Birthday of Buddha, *viz.*, the Full Moon day of May, be proclaimed a full holiday for Buddhist employees of Government, as the sacred days of Mussulmans, Hindus, and Parsis are officially recognised holidays in India for employees of those several faiths. The Buddhists, who are always most loyal subjects, are compelled to either work on this, their most holy day of the year, or lose the day's pay.

(*d*) That all restrictions upon the use of their national and religious music shall be removed, and the Buddhists permitted to hold their religious processions as always hitherto since the remotest epochs. Though your Lordship's despatch to Sir Arthur Gordon of December last, as transmitted to Mr. Perera through the Ceylon Colonial Government, declared that instructions had been given which your Lordship trusted "will enable all Her Majesty's subjects in Ceylon to practise the rites of their respective religions without interference"; yet the

most revered and respected monk in the Island—Sumangala Thero, High Priest of Adam's Peak and Principal of Widyodaya College, Colombo—was, only the other day, denied the privilege of a procession with tom-toms, and thus forced to bring his religious fair, or *pinkamma*, to a premature close. Harsh and unpleasant as the sound of the tom-tom may be to European ears, yet it is music to the Asiatic, and a festival without it is lifeless and uninteresting to them.

(*e*) That Buddhist Registrars of Marriages, etc., shall be appointed in Buddhist villages and wards of cities, and the Buddhists not forced as hitherto to depend for these services upon their bitter enemies of other faiths.

(*f*) That immediate steps shall be taken to decide the question of the Buddhist Temporalities, and, by taking financial matters out of the hands of the priests who, by their ordination laws, are prohibited from meddling in worldly affairs, but nevertheless have been greatly corrupted by the hasty action of the British authorities in turning over to their custody (see Ordnance No. 10, of 1856) the vast estates of the Church, to aid in restoring the pristine virtue of the priesthood. An examination of Ceylon official records shows that the British authorities have, unwittingly, helped to a great extent to injure the tone of Buddhist morality, by first extinguishing the ancient sovereign power of ecclesiastical discipline vested in the King, and then failing to either exercise it themselves or to vest it in a Chamber, or Board, or Council of Priests. The High Priest of the Dālada Maligāwa, at Kandy,

himself bitterly complained to me about this when I was at his temple in January last.

I am sorry to inform your Lordship that discontent and despair are rapidly spreading among the Sinhalese Buddhists ; a fact to be the more deplored, since there is not in all the Imperial realm a more simple, peaceable community. Before the manufacture and sale of arrack was promoted for revenue purposes, they were—unless history belies them—a most kindly, quiet, and virtuous nation. Their devotion to Buddhism appears in the fact that, despite the bloody policy of the Portuguese, and the despicable and crafty one of the Dutch, they ever remained secretly true to their forefathers' faith, and as soon as it became safe under British rule, openly professed it. They feel just now, however, as though the ruling powers were secretly willing to deliver them over to the Romish mob, and determined to deny them common protection. No seer is required to foretell what the legitimate outcome of such a feeling must be, and on behalf of the better part of the nation, I do most earnestly implore your Lordship to take such steps as shall, without dangerous delay, prove to them the sincerity of the professions of Government as made from time to time.

I have the honor to be,
Your Lordship's obedient, humble servant,
(Sd.) Henry S. Olcott.

A few days later, having received further communications from Colombo, I supplemented it with a second letter, to the following effect :

77 ELGIN CRESCENT, NOTTING HILL,

LONDON, 27*th May*, 1884.

To

THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL OF DERBY,

*Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

MY LORD,—I have the honor to enclose, for your Lordship's information, the following additional papers on the matter of the late religious riots at Colombo, Ceylon :

Copies of eight letters and endorsements, included in a correspondence, in February last, between H. Sumangala Thero, High Priest, and certain Government officials, with respect to a Police permit for a religious procession.

The venerable High Priest, as your Lordship will perceive, asked for permission to perform the well-known, popular rite of conveying about the city, with appropriate music, a sacred relic. The object was to help ally the prevalent apprehension "with respect to sicknesses now prevailing at Colombo," the relic being supposed to possess a certain power in itself. If this be regarded as a mere superstition, it is to be observed that it is identical in character with the popular feeling in Catholic and Greek Protestant countries, which demands the similar bearing of relics about the streets in times of pestilence. Moreover, among the Sinhalese Buddhists the ceremonial is hallowed by the custom of many ages.

The documents show that their innocent request was virtually denied, notwithstanding the benevolent

assurances of your Lordship, as communicated through the Colonial authorities in January last.

My latest advices from Ceylon—May 5th, instant—indicate a continuance of the unsettled feeling among the Buddhists; and I venture to hope that, in view of the fact that they have now been patiently waiting for about thirteen months for justice, your Lordship may be able to give early and favorable consideration to the appeal which, on their behalf, I have had the honor to make. With assurances of profound respect.

I have the honor to be,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

(Sd.) H. S. Olcott.

About this time some of the London editors, coming to know of the nature of my business in London, expressed their sympathy; and one Conservative organ, at least, intimated that there had been a miscarriage of justice, and that it was the duty of Government to make proper amends.

I will now complete the record, by giving the text of the reply of the Earl of Derby to my communications, and of the letters which subsequently passed between us:

Downing Street,

17*th June*, 1884.

Sir,—I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 17th

and 27th ultimo, relating to certain grievances which the Buddhists of Ceylon are alleged to be suffering.

2. Lord Derby has already expressed his great regret that it has not been found possible to prosecute the ringleaders of the riots of Easter Sunday last year, and is ready to acknowledge that the sufferers on that occasion have real grounds for complaint in this respect; but in the absence of fresh evidence, it would be impossible to reopen the matter.

3. Her Majesty's Government are resolved that in Ceylon, as in other parts of the Empire, the principles of religious liberty shall be strictly adhered to, and will do their utmost to remove any grievance under which any religious community can be shown to labor, and to put an end to any appearance of disregarding the proclamations of religious neutrality which were made at the time when the English took possession of the Island. It is impossible to make any more explicit statement of the firm intention of the Government to abide by the spirit of those ancient proclamations than has already been made by the Governor, under the instructions of the Secretary of State, as given in Lord Derby's despatch, to which reference is made in your letter of 17th May,

Lord Derby has confidence in the loyalty and good sense of the Buddhist community in Ceylon, and feels sure that they will loyally accept his assurances in this matter.

4. The question of dealing with the Buddhist Temporalities is a difficult one, and has already

engaged the attention of Her Majesty's Government, and of Sir Arthur Gordon's predecessors. No doubt Sir Arthur Gordon, to whom your letter will be referred, will carefully consider the whole matter, and Lord Derby will be glad to give his attention to any practicable scheme suggested to Sir A. Gordon and recommended by him, which would enable the Buddhist community to control the management of the Properties vested in their Church, though clearly the exercise of any such control should be by the Buddhists themselves rather than through the instrumentality of any Government officials.

5. As regards the suggestion that the Birthday of Buddha should be observed as a full holiday for all Buddhist servants of the Government, and the questions of allowing tom-toms in the religious processions, and of the appointment of Buddhist registrars of marriage, Lord Derby can express no opinion without first referring to the Governor, but he is confident that it will be the wish of Sir Arthur Gordon, as it is that of Her Majesty's Government, that every consideration possible should be shown in these matters.

Your letters will accordingly be referred to the Governor by the outgoing mail.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sd.) R. H. Meade.

77 ELGIN CRESCENT, NOTTING HILL, W.,
19*th June*, 1884.

To

THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARL OF DERBY,
*Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

MY LORD,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 17th inst., replying to mine of the 17th and 27th ultimo.

II. On behalf of the Buddhists of Ceylon, I have to thank you for the frank and unequivocal declaration of the intent of Her Majesty's Government to rigidly enforce the neutrality of the Crown in the matter of religious liberty as regards the Buddhist community of Ceylon, equally with other religious communities in all parts of the Empire. Or, as you state it, "to put an end to any appearance of disregarding the proclamations of religious neutrality which were made at the time when the English took possession of the Island." This assurance, if published in the *Gazette* of the Local Government, and made obligatory upon all local officials, will go far towards re-establishing the confidence of the Sinhalese nation, now so deeply shaken by recent events. What the nation wants is the full conviction that they are not to be made the victims of a mob of religious fanatics who, by threatening the peace of Ceylon, can intimidate officials and escape punishment of their crimes.

III. I beg your Lordship's attention to the 2nd clause of the letter under reply, as it really touches the most vital point of the present question. It is

there remarked that "*in the absence of fresh evidence*, it would be impossible to re-open the matter" of the trial of the alleged ringleaders of the riots of Easter Sunday last year. By implication this, of course, affirms that if such "fresh evidence" had been by me brought forward, Her Majesty's Government would have felt it their duty to instruct the Colonial law officers of the Crown to proceed to prosecution, as by statute provided. If I am not mistaken in this deduction, I would most earnestly beg of your Lordship to put that affirmation into so many words. For that alone would, in the opinion of the Sinhalese, restore them to their vested rights as subjects, by showing them that the Courts are as open to them as to their foes, and they need not sue for justice in vain. Until this moment, in the absence of some such assurance since the riots, they have felt the contrary, and it was their despair which drove them to organise the "Buddhist Defence Committee" on the 28th of January last, and send me to England upon my present mission.

IV. A reference to the archives of the Colonial Office will convince your Lordship of the fact that the question of the Buddhist Temporalities is in the state of a case awaiting decision, after a full report by a Special Commission appointed to look into the entire subject. Their report is dated 17th October, 1876, and the delay of Government in acting upon its recommendations has been productive of much injury to the morals of the Kandyan priesthood.

V. I thank your Lordship for the promise to refer to H. E. Sir Arthur Gordon, Governor of Ceylon,

with the expression of the wish of Her Majesty's Government "that every consideration possible should be shown in these matters"—the questions of making Lord Buddha's Birthday a Government holiday for Buddhist public servants, of allowing tom-toms in religious processions, and of the appointment of Buddhist Registrars. I have the full conviction that Sir Arthur Gordon will do all he can to give effect to the expressed sympathies of Government, and in all official matters to treat the Sinhalese with justice, when his attention is called to grievances.

VI. To complete the files of the Colonial Office to date, I hand your Lordship herewith copies of documents received by me by last mail from the Buddhist Defence Committee. They show that permission was denied for a Buddhist religious procession upon the Birthday of Lord Buddha (May 9th), and for another on the Sinhalese New Year's Day (April 11th), although permits were issued for processions, with tom-toms, during the months of February and March, to Mohammedan and Hindu applicants. Can it be that to the representatives of the most ancient religion in Ceylon these simple privileges are to be denied, while granted to communities of all the other and later faiths? That permission to march in religious procession was actually given the Buddhists in one or two instances within the past year, but was of no practical benefit to them, since they were prohibited the use of their tom-toms; and therefore the permit or permits were not availed of. For, as the correspondent shows, a procession without those musical instruments is a tame and lifeless affair. It is the

commonest of things in Great Britain for the ordinary street traffic to be suspended in streets along which authorised processions are passing. It would be no great concession, therefore, for the same thing to be done in the small town of Colombo—where the street traffic is usually very small—upon the rare occasions of Buddhist processions, seeing that the Sinhalese people have ever been loyal and peaceable subjects of Her Majesty, and the privilege for which they are contending has been enjoyed from the remotest antiquity.

I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's obedient Servant,

(Sd.) H. S. Olcott.

Downing Street,

*27th June*, 1884.

Sir,—I am directed by the Earl of Derby to acknowledge the receipt of your further letter of the 19th instant, on the subject of the late unfortunate riots which took place in Ceylon on Easter Sunday last year.

A copy of your letter will be sent to Sir Arthur Gordon, with the previous correspondence, for his consideration. As Governor of the Island he is responsible for the peace and order of the community, and no final decision can be taken without first referring the matter to him.

Lord Derby, however, desires me to acquaint you, with reference to paragraph 3 of your letter, *that your inference is correct that if any fresh evidence had been forthcoming, such as would justify legal proceedings, a*

**prosecution would have been instituted and pressed to its conclusion.**

I am to add, what must be well known in Ceylon,[1] that when the new Queen's Advocate arrived in the Island, he was instructed to review the whole proceedings, with the view to ascertaining whether then, late as it was, those who took part in the disgraceful riots of Easter Sunday might not be brought to justice, and Lord Derby much regrets that this has not been found possible.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Sd.) R. H. MEADE

COLONEL OLCOTT.

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The London business being thus satisfactorily disposed of, I waited, by appointment, upon Lord Derby, to take leave and to thank him for the prompt attention paid by the Colonial Office to the representations made through me by the Sinhalese Buddhists. His Lordship's reception of me was most cordial. He said that the members of Government had been much pained on hearing of the lawless events at Colombo, and he was very sorry not to be able to do more than he had; but he said that if, at any future time, the Sinhalese Buddhists should have occasion to seek the protection of the Colonial Office, he hoped that I would have no hesitancy in writing or speaking to him about it: I should always be most welcome.

[1] As above shown, this fact was not known to the Buddhists.

The sequel to this interesting case is soon told. The demands of the Buddhists, so far as they could be in law, were complied with. Their right of religious processions was recognised. The Birthday of Lord Buddha was proclaimed a full holiday for the Buddhists of Ceylon. The displeasure of Government for the failure of justice, in the matter of prosecuting the rioters, was made known in the Island. Buddhist Registrars of Marriages were appointed ; and finally, the Buddhist Temporalities problem has been recently put in the way of settlement, by the proclamation, in the Government *Gazette*, of the Buddhist Temporalities Ordnance No. 17, of 1895, which placed the vast land endowments of the *Viharas* under the control of committees of laymen, whose duties and responsibilities were defined in the Ordnance itself. In the *Gazette* of Novembor 12th, 1897, Sir E. Noel Walker, Colonial Secretary of Ceylon, proclaimed, by the Governor's command, the rules of the Colombo Provincial Committee, of which not the least important are those relating to the trial and punishment of Buddhist priests for offences against the rules of their ordination, and to the qualifications necessary for candidates for incumbencies of temples. This being the first step in what, I sincerely hope, may be the beginning of the entire reformation of the Ceylon priesthood, I shall quote the Rules in question in this connection.

"1. A representation of an offence committed by an incumbent of a temple or any other priest or priests in violation of the 'Vinaya,' made in writing by five

or more laymen, or by two Buddhist priests, or a Committee member, or by the President of District Committee of the district wherein the offender lives, shall be considered a sufficient cause for the Provincial Committee to institute an inquiry.

"2. The Provincial Committee and a chapter of five, ten, or twenty Buddhist priests selected by the Committee shall constitute a competent body to inquire into offences committed by priests in violation of the 'Vinaya'.

"3. The chapter of Buddhist priests shall belong to the same sect as that of the offender against whom a complaint is preferred, and its opinion is to be taken by the Committee only on 'Vinaya' matters.

"4. The Provincial Committee alone shall have the power of finally deciding on the removal or otherwise of the accused from the incumbency, and in the event of the nature of the offence established at the inquiry requiring that the offender or offenders should be disrobed, it shall be competent for the said Committee, provided the action be acquiesced in by the said advisory council or a majority of its members, to entrust a Committee of priests especially appointed with the execution of this part of the finding.

"5. All charges preferred against priests shall be fully inquired into, and the proceeding duly recorded. Every such inquiry shall be in the presence of the accused, who shall have full liberty to make their defence, unless in case of their absence it is proved to the satisfaction of the Provincial Committee that they have had ample and distinct notice of the inquiry,

and the Committee is satisfied that they have no valid excuse for being absent therefrom, and satisfied that they purposely evade the inquiry.

"6. If any priest who is not duly ordained a priest, or who has been disrobed under the above rules, is found wearing the robes of a Buddhist priest, the Provincial Committee shall have the power to prosecute him at the nearest Police Court.

"7. The characteristic qualifications required in a priest of the Buddhist faith (adherence to an observation of the rules laid down in the 'Vinaya' for their guidance, knowledge of the Buddhist doctrines, and education) shall be considered essential qualifications in candidates for incumbencies, and the Provincial Committee shall give due weight and consideration to such qualifications.

"8. In selecting a candidate to fill up an incumbency Nāti-sisya and Sisyānu sisya Parāmpara successions shall be observed, provided the Provincial Committee is satisfied that the election is not liable to operate against the interest of the temple, and the candidate possesses the qualifications prescribed in rule No. 7."

The following excerpt from my address before the convention of Buddhist Priests, which met at my invitation at Galle, on July 4th, 1880, will also be of interest as showing that my original plans for the elevation and purification of the Buddhist Sangha have now, after the lapse of seventeen years, been realised in the official proclamation of the foregoing Rules. Events have clearly proved the truth of my

forecast, that what a nation really needs and persistently demands, any wise Government will concede. I said, in the address in question :

"I have noticed a very sad apathy among the priests about the question of disrobing such as have been proved immoral and to be disgracing their religion and their Order. At a recent convention of Chief Priests and Kandyan Chiefs I spoke of this as doing enormous injury to both priests and laity. The explanation given was that the Church has no power to unfrock a bad priest, and he can continue to wear the robes in defiance of their authority. In the time of the Kandyan Kings, I was told, the King had the power and used it, but under the present Government there was no remedy. Well, my answer to this is, to point to the Vth clause of the Kandy convention rules, and to have the two million Buddhists of this Island petition and demand that its spirit as well as letter shall be strictly obeyed. The Government has there solemnly bound itself to protect and maintain Buddhism, and, if you demand it, believe me, the clever lawyers of the Crown will find a way to disrobe your bad priests and not violate Buddhist Law. Nothing would be easier than for a High Ecclesiastical Tribunal with adequate powers to be constituted by law. If the Government does nothing, no one is to blame except the Buddhists themselves. How can you expect a Christian Government to help to maintain, 'inviolable,' the religion of Buddha, *when Buddhists will not even open their mouths to ask it to do so?* . . .

"It is my deliberate conviction, based upon these two months' observations, that the entire structure of Sinhalese Buddhism is in danger, and that if this apathy of yours continues, and no determined effort is made to reform the abuses and dissensions that now prevail among both priests and laity, in one more century all Ceylon will have become infidel or Christian—probably the former.

"One more important idea has come to me. The children of Buddhists should be taught their religion, regularly, on specified days, at a specified hour, *at every temple in the Island.* How can we expect them to grow up strong Buddhists if they are not taught the elements of their parents' religion in their childhood? The Christians do not neglect their children; why should Buddhists neglect theirs?"

It was the large endowments of the *Viharas* by former Buddhist sovereigns that demoralised the Order of the Yellow Robe, so far as it was enriched. Private purity, piety, and spiritual aspiration have never survived the acquisition of wealth; the spirit becomes less willing as the flesh grows more and more pampered. However, we are now at the parting of the ways, and the future of Ceylon Buddhism looks brighter. To the spread of our educational movement we have every right to look, in Ceylon, for that gradual raising of the popular intelligence and purging of the national ideals which, infallibly and invariably, react upon all priestly fraternities that develop out of the body of the people.

## CHAPTER XI

## REALITY OF THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE

Of the various methods of propaganda, I am not sure but that I should give first place to the conversaziones at private houses. True that from the lecture platform one addresses his hundreds or thousands, yet I doubt if conviction is so driven home to individual minds, if so many real inquirers are made, and so many members won for the Society, as when one is brought into close relation with the smaller company of a drawing-room. This idea first occurred to me on seeing Mohini leaning against the mantel-shelf at Mr. Sinnett's house in London, and, after a brief exposition of some given theme, answering, *seriatim*, the questions put by the interested company. Since then I have held many such soirées in various countries, and been present at many at which the incomparable Mrs. Besant was the expositor of our teachings, and my conviction has been strengthened by experience. I can now recommend the practice to all our Branches and groups with perfect confidence. At the house of Mrs. Campbell-Praed, in Talbot Square, there was such a gathering on the evening of May 24th, 1884, and by the request of our gifted hostess I explained the principles and scheme of our Society

to as brilliant a party of literary notables as even London could bring together. Questions followed each other rapidly and were answered, and thus in the simplest of ways everybody present came to know something of our great work. Conversaziones like this have been constantly held over the United Kingdom ever since, and, in fact, throughout the whole world wherever there is an English Colony; for the literature of Theosophy has penetrated everywhere, and in most countries its name is familiar as household words.

On the evening of 28th May, at the private house where Mohini and I were guests, I tried the now famous experiment with our colleague, Mr. E. D. Ewen, of Scotland, which suggested the means of proving the nature of thought and the process of its evolution, that has been several times described by me, but which has its place also in this detailed historical sketch. As it interested both Mr. (now Sir William) Crookes and Prof. Balfour Stewart, besides other men of science, at the time, it is not right that I should omit it from my present narrative.

The reader of Stewart and Tait's *Unseen Universe* will remember its being said in that suggestive work that, as the evolution of a thought is accompanied by a sort of galvanic discharge from the grey matter of the brain, and as this vibration passes beyond the periphery of the brain into the ether, and no one can say how far it may extend, it is conceivable that the evolution of thought in a human brain may affect a a distant planet. (I am now quoting from memory while writing on the ocean, and from a book read

many years ago, yet the above is substantially the idea as expressed by the learned authors of the work in question.) Now, this was but a scientific hypothesis, and at the time, I believe, had not been experimentally supported. It was my object to see if any facts could be obtained that might throw light upon this great problem. Circumstances came to my aid at this juncture. Mr. Ewen inherits from his Scotch forebears the gift of second sight; not one that he can exercise at pleasure, but which comes sporadically; he finds he has it on awaking some morning; the next, it is gone and he cannot recall it at will, but must wait until it chooses to reappear. It is usually active throughout the day.

At that time I was, at the urgent request of the lady's husband, giving psychopathic treatment to a well-known literary lady, and, with her permission, one day brought Ewen with me. The lady was confined to her bed, and I treated her as she lay. Mr. Ewen was present. I made the "long passes" over her, downward from her chest towards her feet: not always, however, with "mesmeric intention"—*i.e.*, with concentration of the will—but mechanically, yet without making the passes differently in the one case than in the other. To my surprise, Mr. Ewen suddenly said that he could see that my mind was not always equally bent upon the work in hand; that sometimes I made the vital fluid to flow from me, sometimes not: the difference was most palpable to his clairvoyant sight. Thereupon, I put his powers to the test, but found that he could unerringly distinguish my real from my simulated curative

passes. He described it to me in this way: The patient's body was enveloped in a pale bluish aura, seemingly elastic and compressible, like a loosely-inflated toy balloon. Over the pelvic region—the seat of her disease—the aura was of a yellowish color. When I made by will a curative pass with my hands, there flowed from my finger-tips strong, clear streams of vital force, in color a bright and clear sapphire. This strong current, impinging upon the patient's pale blue aura, was met with a feeble resistance from the latter, but, overcoming this by its own strong rush, it mingled with the weaker aura, tinged it with its own hue, and set it into quick vibration; the result being a reinvigoration of the invalid's system, and the creating of a tendency towards convalescence. I am convinced of the accuracy of this description, and, in fact, in the case under mention, the lady, instead of lying in bed for months, as her doctor had predicted she must, was up and about within the next ten days. The improvement was so striking, after even the first treatment, that her medical attendant was astounded at his next visit, and said she must have something uncanny about her constitution, some extra spring in her machinery that was out of the common run. This she conveyed to me in a gleeful note the next day, and said that she and her nurse were laughing together over the doctor's illusion as to the success of his remedies, and his ignorance of the fact of my having treated her and thus put in the suspected "spring" that had worked such a wonder.

The evening after our vist to Mrs. M. C., I was called upon by Mr. Herbert Stack to arrange for a

meeting between myself and the S. P. R. Committee, and, as he was a man of high culture and of scientific tastes, I told him of Ewen's powers, and suggested that this would be a good chance for us to see whether Stewart and Tait's theory of thought-evolution was a sound one. As our Scottish friend was still possessed of the vision, and willing to assist in the experiment, it was thus arranged : We were to sit in the unlighted back drawing-room, he with his back to the solid partition to the right of the sliding doors, we two facing him, over against the opposite wall ; one of us was to concentrate his thought upon any subject he might choose ; if Ewen should be able to fix the moment of concentration, he was simply to say the word "Now!" and we all should then be able to see whether his power extended so far or not. The object in giving him but the one word to utter was to preclude the necessity for his making any sustained mental effort at the time when his consciousness would be functioning on the other and higher plane. Two experiments made by Mr. Stack were successful ; the moment of mental concentration being detected by the clairvoyant watcher. Mr. Stack then asked me to try, as, he said, I was much more in the habit of doing these mental feats than himself. Just as I was about to do so and Ewen was all ready, it occurred to me that if I should hold Mr. Stack's hand and press it at the moment of concentrating my thoughts, both he and I could know whether or not Ewen's power was real, and the evidence would be doubly strong. So we agreed ; I took Mr. Stack's hand, and, after a moment's calming of the mind, concentrated.

Instantly, before I could transmit the order to my finger muscles, Ewen cried out "Now!" and our plan was frustrated. I was vexed at this, for some instinct made me anxious that the committee-man of the S. P. R. should get such a bit of valuable proof at first hand. His ingenuity, however, was equal to the occasion, for he proposed that he should hold my hand and give me the signal for concentration. This proved all sufficient; he pressed my hand, I fixed my thought, and Ewen, as before, detected the moment of the act. So far so good; we had now four tests between us two, but I suggested, as an extension of the experiment, that we should see if Ewen could trace the *direction* of thought if it were fixed upon a certain point within the two rooms. Of the two tests made, both were successes. The first time he said: "I think your thought is directed to the ceiling over my head"; the second time he said: "I see the thought-current passing by me, to the left, as if directed to some point in the front drawing-room." In both cases he was right: the thinker, at the second attempt, directed his attention to a lady, Mme. De Steiger, who sat at the farther end of the lighted front drawing-room.

Mr. Ewen's description of the luminous appearance of a thought-current was very interesting. When one concentrates his mind upon some subject, not of an exciting nature, a shimmer of light goes forth from his brain, like the pulses of light in an electrically charged cloud on a warm summer night. When, on the other hand, the mind sends its outflowing aura to a fixed spot or object, a ray darts from the brain

towards its target, like the flash of lightning in a thunderstorm. These revelations, it will be remembered, were made in May, 1884; they received no corroboration for twelve years, but then the accuracy of Mr. Ewen's observations was, I think, fully proven by those of other and more highly trained students of occult science, as will presently appear.

An acute scientific mind like Mr. Crookes' could not fail to be interested with facts like these, which pointed the way towards a splendid field of psychological research. I took Mr. Ewen to him the next morning and described what Mr. Stack and I had seen. He frankly said that this was an important matter, and he would like to follow it up if Mr. Ewen would be so obliging as to lend his services to the inquiry: he further wished to test the physical nature of the thought-current, and see whether it would pass without deflection through sheets of glass and other materials; whether the luminous wave could be focussed by lenses, reflected by mirrors, etc.; in short, whether it had any properties which would make it function on the physical plane, in any degree to be tested by laboratory appliances.[1] Unfortunately, Mr. Ewen's clairvoyance had not shown itself that day, and he had to leave for Scotland in the afternoon, so that he could not aid in the suggested experiments—much to his own regret, for he is deeply interested in this branch of scientific investigation, and needed

[1] Writing from memory, without notes, and so many thousand miles away from London, I beg the indulgence of Sir William Crookes for any minor inaccuracies that may have crept into my narrative of the incidents of fourteen years ago.

no urging. At a large public meeting of the S. P. R., on the evening of May 28th, Mr. Stack and I made our reports on the preliminary experiments, and thus made it a matter of historical record.

The bearing which this discovery has upon certain familiar phenomena will be evident to the intelligent reader; for instance, the *jettatura* and *mal occhio*, or killing glance and "evil eye," with which certain persons are congenitally cursed—the late Pope Pius IXth among them. Ignorant persons like to call this a superstitious folly, but it must be confessed that no popular belief has been more strongly supported by evidence. And it is one that is not confined to one nation or country, but is spread all over the world and recorded in all history. The glance of a human eye may either soothe or slay, according to the mental impulse behind it, provided that the person thought of is sensitive to its vibration. Find the key-note of a glass vessel or globe, and, by playing it with the right intensity on a violin, the glass will be shattered, while no other note will affect it. So man, the most sensitive of organisations, has each his key-note which, if found and played by a thought-current, will carry him out of his equilibrium, perhaps upset his moral nature, or even destroy his life. The world-history of magic and sorcery proves this amply. Thus, it is a truism of ancient date that the hateful will-current of a black magician, if hurled at a pure and saintly person, fails to harm him and is thrown back against the sender, to his possible destruction. No woman was ever seduced, no young man ever made a criminal, unless in their moral systems there was some

sympathetic tendency which had been set to quivering and vibrating by the impact of the influences of their environment. It was Horace who said: *Hic murus æneus esto, nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.* And the experience of mankind teaches that this innocence of evil, this absence of consciousness of sin, is indeed a wall of everlasting bronze about us. Mr. Ewen's second-sight makes it possible for us to realise the truth of this old mystery. So, also, does it make clear the rationale of the charming power of animals and men. It has been denied by some scientists that the bird-charming of serpents is a fact, yet here we have the key to it. We once had at Adyar a yellow cat, which I have seen sitting under the branches of a tall tree and gazing up at a squirrel. The pretty little rodent would move uneasily, squeal, and then drop to the ground before the cat, which would quietly catch it and carry it off to her young. In *Isis Unveiled* (i, 380) is told the story of Jacques Pelissier, a French peasant of Le Var, "who made a living by killing birds by simple *will power*." His case is reported by a savant, Dr. D'Alger, who saw him at work, and declares that the man, by merely fixing his gaze on a sparrow, robin, goldfinch, or meadow-lark, from a distance of twenty, twenty-five, or even thirty paces, would cause it to drop paralysed on the ground, when he would walk up to and do what he liked with it. If asked, he would not completely paralyse his victims, but only partially, and then restore them to animation. Or, if asked, he would kill them absolutely, before laying his hand upon them. Mme. Blavatsky says that this destructive

current is a "bolt of the astral fluid," or ether, and warns against the misuse or cultivation of a power which enables one to commit murder at a distance, without detection, leaving no visible mark upon the victim's person. In such cases, she says, "the Coroner's inquest will never disclose anything but sudden death, apparently resulting from heart disease, an apoplectic fit, or some other natural but still not veritable cause."

The great mesmeriser, Regazzoni, is reported to have stricken down and instantly paralysed a blindfolded girl-subject, by his unspoken will, when the scientific observers present requested him to give them this proof of his power.

The facts above cited deal mainly with the effect of a thought-current which operates upon objects visible to the eye. Many others offer themselves for use in the argument, but I shall take only one or two. In India, if a cultivator has a good crop of paddy or other grain that is likely to excite the envy or cupidity of passers-by, he drives a stake in the ground near the middle of the field, and hangs on it an inverted clay pot (*ghurra*) with a grotesque face smeared on it with lime, so that the evil glance may see it first and be "drawn" before it can injure the crop; for it is the first glance that does the mischief. So, too, the Hindu mother of a handsome child will smear its face with some charcoal or mud to protect its young life from the envious glance of some childless woman. This bolt of hate or envy, if hurled, cannot quickly be followed by a second, and hence these devices to draw it away from its target.

If the reader will now turn to the number of *Lucifer* for September, 1896, and read Mrs. Besant's striking article on "Thought-forms," he will see how completely her observations and those of her advanced fellow-students support the descriptions of Mr. Ewen, given me twelve years earlier, and also the folk-lore teachings about the evil eye, and the observed facts of healing of the sick by gaze alone. Here she describes, from actual vision, the luminous flashes of color that come when the thought is of a general character, and the sharp, dagger-like, darting flash when an evil thought is shot against an individual. The colored illustrations given with the text make the law of thought-evolution very clear to us. Her Figure 4 shows a zigzag flash of dull red aura breaking out of a mental storm-cloud, for all the world like the lightning-bolt that rives an oak in a thunderstorm. This is the thought of brutal violence, sent by a man who has just stricken down a woman in an East London slum. The thought-form in Figure 5 is that of a murderer, and exactly like the blade of a poniard. Such must have been the "air-drawn dagger" that the guilty Macbeth saw, yet could not clutch : a "one-pointed" thought, indeed ; a wicked, life-taking thought. Human speech is full of expressions which indicate that their first users had an instinctive, if not a clairvoyant, sense of their fitness. For example, the common one: "He looks daggers at me," exactly represents the shape and motion of a thought of hatred when directed towards someone : a "bright mind," a "sunny mood," a "clouded intellect," the often reiterated confession of the

murderer that "all looked red about me," "green-eyed jealousy," "his glance seemed to pierce me through and through," etc., similarly support these observations of our clairvoyants.

The same rule holds as to the loving, helping, unselfish thought that would help instead of harming, do good instead of evil. No ocean is too wide, no continent too vast, to obstruct the running of such a good thought to its goal. The ancient *shastras* teach that it will even bridge the chasm of death, and follow its object into the trans-sepulchral states of existence. The moral to be drawn from these observations, none the less powerful from its being so evident, is that we have it in our power to ban or bless our fellow-men by the one-pointed thought-currents we send forth from our minds. But this has been indicated by so many speakers and writers of our literature in that of the ages which preceded our own, that I need not dwell upon it, but for the one moment needed to drive it in upon the mind of every one who aims at spiritual advancement and the doing of good to the race.

## CHAPTER XII

## THE PAINTING OF ADEPT PORTRAITS

Two days after the thought-testing experiments with Mr. Ewen, I went to Paris and remained there a fortnight with H. P. B. Meetings for the instruction of inquirers were held at our own rooms in the Rue Notre Dame des Champs and at those of several friends. Among them was one at the palace of Lady Caithness, at which we met M. Yves Guyot, the famous publicist, and some of his friends as sceptical as himself about things spiritual. H. P. B. and I were made by our hostess, to our great discontent, to sit in two huge throne-like gilt arm-chairs, as though we were royal personages holding a levee. M. Guyot and the others drew from us a full explanation of the principles of our Society and of the views of the Eastern school of mystics as to the constitution of nature and the alleged powers in man. All went well until they said they would now feel obliged if we would show them the phenomenal proof of the correctness of our teachings. I, for my part, had not expected this, as Lady Caithness had not prepared us for any such demand. H. P. B. refused point blank to do the smallest marvel, and could not be moved even by the urgent request of Lady Caithness. I told

M. Guyot that we had done what lay within our power to explain the Eastern views as to states of matter beyond those hitherto discovered by Western science, and must leave him to accept, reject, or test them as might seem best to him ; I assured him, however, from my own experience, that if any man really wished to get the proofs at first hand, he could do so if he would but take as much trouble as he would cheerfully undergo to gain knowledge in any other department of scientific research : but I regretted as much as himself that Mme. Blavatsky was not willing to do as much for him as I had often seen her do for other inquirers. But so it was, and we must leave the matter as it stood for the present. Of course, M. Guyot and his friends were much dissatisfied, but I never expected that a man of his standing would descend to such insulting and disparaging remarks about H. P. B. and myself as he did some time later. As things turned out, I now believe that H. P. B.'s stubborn refusal was a wise one, and that she or those behind her foresaw that compliance would have been worse than useless, for spiritual phenomena can only be comprehended by the spiritually-minded, and to that class M. Guyot most certainly did *not* belong. If H. P. B. had shown him anything, the most that would have happened would, probably, have been that, on leaving the house, he would have said to his companions : "I wonder how that fraudulent old witch did that trick." What he did say about us subsequently fully warrants the suspicion. I fancy that he and Mr. Podmore and the late Prof. Carpenter and some hundreds more of the sort, will

have to be reincarnated many times before they will be able to understand the laws of spirit-action on this physical plane.

I first made the acquaintance of that illustrious man, the late Prof. Charcot, at the Hospice de la Salpétrière, Paris, on 7th June, 1884. I called there with Dr. Combret, F.T.S., a former pupil of his, and the Professor kindly showed me various experiments in hypnotism. This subject has now become so widely known, that it is useless for me to dwell at any length upon the things that were shown me fourteen years ago. It must be familiar to most of my readers, at least to those outside India, that there are two very antagonistic schools among hypnotists, *viz.*, the one of Charcot at La Salpétrière, Paris, and the other of Nancy, Lorraine, founded by Dr. Liêbault and his great disciple Dr. Bernheim. From a remote period there have existed the two parties which these schools now represent, and especially among alienists or physicians who treat patients mentally deranged. The one party, that of Charcot, attribute the abnormal mental and other phenomena of hypnotic subjects to physiological causes; while the other party, that of Nancy, trace them to psychological, *i.e.*, operative mental causes. My readers will find the questions treated at length in back numbers of the *Theosophist*,[1] together with an account of my experiments at the Salpétrière and Hôpital Civil (Nancy) in the year 1891. The observations of 1884 were valuable, as giving me my

[1] Vol. xiii, pp. 61 and 391: art. "My Hypnotic Research in France," *q.v.*

first chance to see for myself how far the so-called new science of hypnotism agreed with the century old science of mesmerism, which I had been studying for the previous forty years. Dr. Charcot provoked in his patients the three stages of hypnosis which he claims the credit of classifying, *viz.* : (1) the cataleptic ; (2) the lethargic ; (3) the somnambulic. In the first, the position of the patient's limbs is easily changed by the operator, and every position given them is unresistingly retained for some time ; in the second, the subject is unconscious, and if a limb be raised and then let go, it will fall like a dead weight, the eyes are relaxed and the muscles abnormally excitable ; in the third, the eyes are closed, or half closed, the muscles may be made to rigidly contract by gentle stimulation of the skin over them, and many other phenomena are producible by suggestion. The Nancy school admit the fact of all these phenomena, but ascribe them solely to the influence of suggestion upon the mind of the patient : "suggestion" covering not only ideas conveyed to him verbally by the hypnotiser, but also silently by gesture, or voluntary or involuntary movements of his body, or even the expression of his face. No one who has not made a deep study of the subject has an idea of the tremendous potentialities included in this matter of hypnotic suggestion : there is scarcely any limit to what may be done by it as regards the control of one mind over another. Charcot produced for me an artificial paralysis of a patient's limb by applying to it a strong magnet : I can do the same without a magnet, without even touching the patient with my hand, simply by suggestion ; he

transferred the paralysis from one arm to the other by the same agency, *viz.*, the magnet ; I can do it without one : so can a man of the Nancy school, so can any experienced mesmeriser. Then why must we believe the effect physiological when the provoking cause is mental and lies outside the physical system of the subject ?

On 13th June I returned to London in company with Mr. Judge, who had come over from New York to see us on his way out to India, his intended future field of work. A little while before this I had instituted a friendly competition between certain of our London associates who were either professional or amateur artists, to try an important psychical experiment. My earlier readers will recall my description (see London edition OLD DIARY LEAVES, 1st Series, ch. xxiii, pp. 370-373) of the way in which my adept Guru redeemed his promise that he would give me his portrait at a convenient time. This was a profile likeness, drawn by an amateur who was not an occultist, either trained or untrained, and so, while the resemblance was unquestionable—as I verified later in personal intercourse—it did not show the soul-splendor that lights up an adept's countenance. Naturally, I wanted to get a better portrait if possible, and bethought me to try whether my sympathetic artistic colleagues in London could get clearer, more life-like, spiritual glimpses of his divine face. Upon broaching the subject, the five—three professionals and two amateurs—whom I addressed, very kindly and willingly consented, and I lent each in turn the photographic copy of the original crayon sketch that

I had with me. The results were very instructive. One had got the right idea of his complexion, another of his profile, and a third, my respected friend Mme. De Steiger, of the luminous aura that shimmers about his head. But neither of the five was, on the whole, a better likeness than the New York sketch by Monsieur Harrisse. Before this competition was finished, Herr Hermann Schmiechen, a very well-known German portrait-painter, domiciled in London, joined the Society and, to my great delight, at once agreed to have the inspirational test tried with him. The photograph was handed him with no suggestion as to how the subject should be treated. He began work on 19th June and finished it on 9th July. Meanwhile I visited his studio four times alone and once with H. P. B., and was enchanted with the gradual development of the mental image which had been vividly impressed upon his brain, and which resulted in as perfect a portrait of my Guru as he could have painted from life. Unlike the others, who all copied the profile idea of Harrisse, Schmiechen gave the face in full front view, and poured into the eyes such a flood of life and sense of the indwelling soul as to fairly startle the spectator. It was as clear a work of genius and proof of the fact of thought-transference as I can imagine. In the picture he has got all—the face, complexion, size, shape and expression of eyes, natural pose of head, shining aura, and majestic character. It hangs in the Picture Annexe of the Adyar Library that I had built for it and the companion portrait which Schmiechen painted of our other chief Guru,

and on entering the room the visitor feels as if those grand eyes were searching his very heart. I have noticed the signs of this first impression in nearly every case, and the feeling of awe is enhanced by the way in which the two pairs of eyes follow one about the room, still seemingly reading one, no matter where he may take his stand. Then, again, by some trick of the artist's brush, the shining aura about the two heads seems to be actually in a shimmery motion, just as it is in nature. No wonder the religiously-minded visitor finds himself, as it were, impressed with a sense of the holiness of the room where the two portraits hang, and meditative introspection is easier there than elsewhere. Grand as they are by day, the pictures are even more striking by night, when properly lighted, and the figures seem as if ready to step out of their frames and approach one. The artist has made two or more copies of the portraits, but they lack the life-like character of the original; he evidently lacking the stress of inspiration under which the latter were produced. As for the photographs which were—against my passionate protest—permitted to be made from the copies, they are as inferior to the originals at Adyar, as a tallow candle to the electric light. And it has made me inexpressibly sad that these glorious faces, in cheap photographs, have been sold over the counter by Judgeites, and published in a magazine and a book by Dr. Hartmann.

Does it not seem as if this foregoing experiment threw a great light on the mystery of art-inspiration, and helped us to see what makes the difference

between a great painter or sculptor and the general rabble of the professions? The great artist must be a man whose lower mind is sensitive to the impressions that can be impressed on it by his higher, or spiritual, consciousness, and his best works would be produced in those so-called moments of "inspiration," when this transfer of consciousness is going on. Is it not illustrated in the case in point, when the artist, guided and fired by an influx from without, paints such pictures as he cannot duplicate in his normal state of independent mortality? And is not the Titian, Rubens, Claude, Cellini, Leonardo, Praxiteles, or Pheidias, one who is open to the guidance of the Higher Self, capable of receiving in "flashes" those race-lifting glimpses of the divine reality behind these walls of flesh? A point of interest in this instance is that the Schmiechen portrait of my Guru was the seventh attempt to get a worthy reflection of his image, for the helping of those who cannot as yet go in *sukshma sharira* to the *Ashram* and converse with him face to face.

At about this same time, in July, 1884, occurred at the house of our dear hostess, Mrs. Arundale, the afternoon reception by H. P. B. which Mrs. Campbell-Praed has so vivaciously sketched in one of her novels, *Affinities*. It brings the scene vividly to mind, and I can see the lion-faced H. P. B. sitting there, smoking her cigarettes and resisting all the attempts of Professors Barrett, Oliver Lodge, Coues, Mme. Novikoff, and several others to get her to make some phenomena for them; the while, an insinuatingly kittenish and supple-framed

American lady sitting on the arm of her chair, and now and then snuggling her face under the old lady's double-chin, to her evident disapproval. I stood as spectator in the doorway, greatly amused at the comedy that was going on. Mrs. Campbell-Praed has it all in her story, down to the details of Babula's coming into the room, and Mohini's participation in the conversation and discussions.

The making of the acquaintance of Sir Edwin Arnold, briefly alluded to in Chapter VIII, was one of the notable incidents of that London summer. I met him at the dinner table of a well-known society lady, and shall not forget my astonishment when he was pointed out to me by the lady whom I took in to dinner. The reading of a poem or great novel gives one a sort of ideal of the probable appearance of its author. I had expected to find in the writer of *The Light of Asia* a person of a romantic type of countenance, pale, with delicate features, a dreamy eye, and a frame of rather the feminine type ; instead of which, there sat at the opposite side of the table a portly man, with a large nose and mouth, thick lips, more of a worldly than cloistral look, and wearing a black silk skull-cap. "You must be mistaken," I said to the lady, "that cannot be Arnold!" But it was, as I found on going around and talking with him after the ladies left the room. He kindly asked me to lunch at his house, and was good enough to present me, as above noted, with some pages of the original manuscript of *The Light of Asia*, which are now treasured in the Adyar Library. It was from that original that I read when we celebrated, at Adyar, the

first anniversary of the death of our dear H. P. B., in compliance with the terms of her Will.

In the same month I went to the seat of Lord Borthwick, Ravenstone, in Wigtonshire, Scotland, on a visit, and thence on to Edinburgh, where I founded the Scottish Theosophical Society, with the late Robert M. Cameron as President, and E. D. Ewen as Secretary. Despite the liberalisation of modern thought, the old Presbyterian influence is still so strong in the Northern Capital, as to prevent the very learned and influential men composing this excellent Branch from openly avowing their interest in our movement. Their names are concealed from the public, and admission to their meetings barred against all outsiders. It seems ridiculous that this should be so, and I, for my part, if I lived in Edinburgh, would defy the bigoted public to do their worst, even, if they dared, to burn me for a heretic, rather than submit to such moral slavery. However, men are not all of one opinion as to these questions of expediency, and the spread of our ideas goes on all the same, whether on or below the surface of contemporary society. The only other country in the world where we have encountered the same state of things is Russia, where persecution is the order of the day for such as dare swerve from the straight lines of the State religion.

On the day after the Branch was formed, I lectured on "Theosophy" in the Oddfellows Hall, to a crowded audience. The incident is worth recording for what happened at the close. Among those who came up to shake me by the hand, was a gentleman

who said that the views expressed in the lecture were identical with those which he preached from his own pulpit. I found, upon inquiry, that he was the most popular Presbyterian minister in Edinburgh, and I must say I was astonished that he had recognised in Theosophy the spirit of his particular form of creed, for, having been brought up in it myself, I had always associated it with all that was narrow, bigoted, and hateful: the embodiment of religious tyranny. The conviction now sank into my mind that the followers of even the most intolerant sects will soften and spiritualise their creeds if themselves superior to them, and that even a Scottish Presbyterian may, in exceptional cases, be as kind to his fellow-men outside his sectarian fence, as though he had not been brought up on the iron-and-thunder theology of Knox and Calvin. Do we not see it exemplified in the history of Islam? At one time, the courts of its Khalifs were homes of tolerance and religious amity; at another, hell-centres of bigotry and massacre. "In the tenth century," says Draper, "the Khalif Hakem II had made beautiful Andalusia the Paradise of the world. Christians, Mussulmans, Jews, mixed together without restraint. . . . All learned men, no matter from what country they came, or what their religious views, were welcomed. . . . His library contained four hundred thousand volumes, superbly bound and illuminated. . . . Almansor, who usurped the Khalifate . . . put himself at the head of the orthodox party. He therefore had the library of Hakem searched, and all works of a scientific or philosophical nature carried into the public places

and burnt or thrown into the cisterns of the palace." Averroes, the ornament of Islam, a star of the first magnitude in the sky of learning, "was expelled from Spain . . . denounced as a traitor to religion. There was hardly a philosopher who was not punished. Some were put to death, and the consequence was that Islam was full of hypocrites."[1]

This is the holding of the mirror up to human nature, for what happened under the Khalifs has always happened, is happening now, and ever will do the same. For the moment, the learned men who belong to our Scottish Branches may be forced to hide their connection with us, and go to meetings under cover, but as surely as the sun will rise to-morrow, the day is not far distant when Theosophy will be preached, not in one but the majority of Scottish pulpits, and it will be deemed an honor to hold our diplomas of membership. For Scottish nature is but human nature, and the national intellect is powerful beyond the average of the intellects of human races, and cannot be prevented from following wherever the thinkers of the past have been able to soar. When the day of liberty dawns, then—as I told the Edinburgh colleagues when forming the Branch—I shall expect Scottish Theosophists to outstrip all others in spreading the Ancient Wisdom throughout the world.

On 8th July there was an open meeting of the London Lodge, T.S., at the Prince's Hall, Piccadilly, intended as a public and farewell demonstration to H. P. B. and myself. Many distinguished people in

[1] *Conflict between Religion and Science*, p. 142.

science, literature, diplomacy, and society were present, and addresses were given by Mr. G. B. Finch, then President of the London Lodge, Mr. Sinnett, Mohini, and myself. My topic was "Theosophy"; Mohini's, "The Wisdom of the Aryans"; and Mr. Finch's, a welcome and farewell to us.

My next move was towards Germany, where what happened was so interesting from the Theosophical as well as the personal point of view, that I shall reserve the narrative for the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XIII

## GERMAN EXPERIENCES

I CROSSED from Queensborough to Flushing, on the night of 23rd July, in one of the splendid boats that ply on that line, and reached Elberfeld (Germany) at 3 p.m. the following day. A most sisterly welcome was given me by Frau Gustav Gebhard, since, alas! deceased. A sweeter or more loyal character I never met. She was one of those women who shed about them an atmosphere of love and virtue, fill their homes with sunshine, make themselves indispensable to their husbands and adored by their children. Frau Gebhard possessed for her colleagues in the T. S. the special attraction of being a born mystic, and for many years a student of the occult, so far as her family duties allowed. For seven years she had been one of the two pupils of Eliphas Levi,[1] and after the siege of Paris was raised, that half-starved and ill-starred Occultist found generous hospitality in her house for a long period. Her impressions of him were contributed by her to the *Theosophist* for January, 1886. She speaks very kindly and appreciatively of him as a learned Kabbalist, a teacher, and a friend, but says that his Epicurean nicety in the matter of eating was his weak point and was often to her " a

[1] Baron Spedalieri was the other.

matter of wonder ". As both of them are dead, there is no harm in my saying that Mrs. Gebhard told me that Eliphas was an enormous eater, craved rich food, both animal and vegetable, and drank much wine at his dinner. Mrs. Gebhard's intercourse with him was chiefly in writing, he taking her through a long course of occult instruction by this medium. A large portion of these teachings were, with the kind permission of Frau Gebhard, translated for the *Theosophist*, and will be found in the volumes for 1884 (Supplement), 1885 and 1886. The Gebhard mansion was furnished in the best taste, and, in the temporary absence in America of Herr G. Gebhard, the host, his whole family vied with each other in making the home delightful to their guests. On the upper floor Frau Gebhard had an occult room for herself, where she had a choice library of rare books on her favorite subjects, and on the wall a portrait from life, in oils, of her master, Eliphas Levi. It represented him just as he is described by her in the article above mentioned—" of a short and corpulent figure ; his face was kind and benevolent, beaming with good nature, and he wore a long grey beard which covered nearly the whole of his breast." It was an intellectual face, but that of a man whose attractions were for physical rather than for spiritual things ; a face totally unlike that of the type of our Indian Adepts, upon which the majesty of a divine aspiration is enthroned. Two days after my arrival, the first of a group of expected Theosophists came in the persons of Mme. Hæmmerlé, of Odessa ; Dr. Hübbe Schleiden, of Hamburg ; and Dr. E. Coues, of

Washington ; and on the following day, at a meeting held in the "occult room," our first German Branch, the "Theosophische Gesellschaft Germania," was formed. The officers elected were : *President*, Dr. Hübbe Schleiden ; *Vice-President*, Frau M. Gebhard ; *Treasurer*, Consul G. Gebhard ; and *Secretary*, Herr Franz Gebhard, the worthy son of excellent parents. This was the beginning of the movement in the most intellectual country of Europe, a field which in the course of time must yield a splendid harvest, though, like Scotland, local causes will long keep back its full development. While in Scotland our obstacle is the unexhausted power of Calvinism, in Germany there are several, *viz.*, the tumultuous mental activity within the circle of pecuniary interests, the enormous development of physical science with its accompanying spiritual prostration, and the surviving distrust of mysticism, mystical teachers, and systems, which was caused by the overdose given to Germany by the Rosicrucians, the Egyptian Masonry of Cagliostro, and the misunderstood claims and labors of the mediæval alchemists. A century ago and more, Germany was the centre and hottest nucleus of all this occult research, and if we now see a reactive tendency, it is but the natural working of unchangeable law. The capacity for this high spiritual aspiration is innate in the German character, and it is quite possible that in future some change of circumstances will bring it once more into activity. If it were wise to do so, I might mention names of high Germans secretly inclined towards our Theosophical ideas, that would make my remark seem

quite warranted; but all will be made clear in time. Meanwhile, my duty is to go on as I have throughout so many years, keeping many secrets about persons and things locked up in my breast, and suffering myself and others to be maligned and misunderstood for the sake of the cause to which we have devoted "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor".

We have at Adyar a souvenir of the above incident, in an excellent photograph of the group of friends who assisted in forming the new German Branch, and Frau Franz Gebhard has one of myself in an oil portrait for which I gave her sittings. In the interest of the movement in Germany, I left Elberfeld on 1st August with Dr. Hübbe Schleiden for Dresden. It was on that day that the good Doctor received in the train a letter from one of the Masters which answered a question that he had just then put to me. As his account of the incident has been published by the S. P. R. (with their usual sniffings and suspicions), there is no impropriety in my saying that he had begun a conversation about certain painful experiences of his early years, which he was then relating for the first time, and about which he had not spoken to Mme. Blavatsky. While we were thus occupied, the railway guard came to the right-hand window of the carriage for our tickets. I sat to the Doctor's left. He took both his and my ticket and leaned to the right to hand them to the guard, across the knees of the person who sat to his right. As he was resuming his seat, he saw between his body and the next passenger a letter: it was addressed to himself

in the K. H. handwriting, was in a Tibetan, or, rather, Chinese envelope, and its contents not only explained the cause of the misfortunes he had just been complaining of, but also answered certain questions he had addressed to H. P. B. (then in London) in a posted letter, to which, in due course of mail, there had not been time to receive her reply.[1] The case *seems* free of taint of fraud, but the kind, generous S. P. R. critic who reviews it hints at the possibility of an agent of (the penniless) H. P. B. having been in the train with us ! Really, with such people is it worth while to waste time in taking them seriously ? At all events, poor Dr. Hübbe was much cheered up and encouraged by the contents of the letter, which, after all, was the principal thing. And I too rejoiced in his joy—as my Diary records it.

At Weisser Hirsch, a summer resort near Dresden, we visited that noble soul Herr Oskar von Hoffmann, a gentleman in every instinct as well as action. He was then engaged on a translation of *Esoteric Buddhism*, which he subsequently published at his own cost. It was at his house in Leipzig that Zöllner and the other Professors of the Leipzig University held their memorable séances with Slade, the medium, which confirmed Zöllner in his theory of a Fourth Dimension. The Germans are a handsome race, with a suggestion of the lion, very often, in their faces, and Herr von Hoffmann was a marked example of the type. Both he and his brother who resides in England have been my dear friends for

[1] Second Report on H. P. B.'s Phenomena to the S. P. R., pp. 383-4.

many years, and the latter, especially, has helped the Society when it most needed help.

The same evening Dr. Hübbe and I called on Herr Schroeder, the famous magnetiser, who does—or was then doing—wonders in psychopathic healing. His method was simplicity itself ; he sets up an auric communication with his patient, and then just lets his superfluous vitality flow into the other's system until he is cured or helped, as the case may be. Puts himself on tap, as one might say ! Well, that is what the Jewish doctors made the Shunamite woman, Abishag, do for old King David, and it is scientific therapeutics. After two more days at Dresden we went to Bayreuth, where we were in time to attend a representation of *Parsifal* in Wagner's own theatre. The performance lasted from 4 to 9 p.m., and was deeply impressive. The effect was, in fact, indescribably grand. The Doctor and I called on Baron Hans von Wolzogen, Vice-President and Manager of the Wagner Verein. He received us in his library, where he was standing at a high desk correcting proofs of an article on " Theosophy and Wagner ". The coincidence struck us all as strange, and this impression was enhanced when, on hearing my name, he turned to a book-shelf and, with the remark that a friend at Helsingfors had sent it him the day before, handed me a copy of my *Buddhist Catechism*, gilt-edged and bound in white velvet ! Wagner, he told us, was deeply interested in Buddhism, and *Parsifal* was originally written to represent the Buddha's struggles after wisdom and his attainment of the Buddhahood. But at the

instance of the kings of Saxony and Prussia and other august patrons, he had recomposed it into its present form, a search after the Holy Grail.

Dr. Coues and Herr Rudolph Gebhard, F.T.S., joined us at Bayreuth in time to attend the opera, and Coues went on with Dr. Hübbe and myself to Münich, which we reached at 8 p.m. on the 5th of August and went to a hotel. We called on Dr. Franz Hartmann's most estimable sister, the Countess von Spreti, wife of a retired German army officer, and visited the great galleries of paintings and sculptures. The same evening those excellent people, with a Captain Urban and Herr Diesel, another popular mesmeriser, came and spent a pleasant time with us at our hotel. It was here also that I first met Baron Ernst von Weber, the veteran anti-vivisectionist, whom my Indian colleagues will recollect as a Delegate from Germany at one of our Adyar Conventions, and a F.T.S. who was proud of the title. The next morning he accompanied Dr. Hübbe and myself to Ambach, the summer villa, on the lovely Starnberger See, of Prof. Gabriel Max, the great German painter. We returned to town in the evening, but went back again the next day to Ammerland, another lakeside bit of Paradise, where Baron Carl du Prel, the Philosopher, was in the habit of spending his hot-weather seasons. He was a short, stoutish, hardy, sun-browned man, with an honest face and a noble head, inside which worked one of the grandest brains of our times. Du Prel was the most esoteric and Theosophical writer of his time in Germany. We dined at Prof. Max's. He is a short man also, with a thick and long body, a

great intellectual head, and is very shy with strangers. We stopped at Ambach that night and the next day and night, returning to Münich on the 10th. A most charming and memorable experience it was throughout. Add to the grand company of high-thinkers, a perfect, sunny day, a clear sky, a lakeshore spread with velvety turf, picturesque villas, a smell of pines in the air, and before us, open, like a heavenly mirror of cloud and shore, the unruffled expanse of Starnberger See. Amid such surroundings I admitted into the Society's membership, on the 9th, the Baron and Baroness Du Prel, Prof. and Frau Max, the latter's sister, Fräulein Kitzing, Count and Countess von Spreti, Baron E. von Weber, and Captain Urban. Mme. Hæmmerlé, of Odessa, had joined us on the 8th, and was present in the capacity of an old member. That there was some high talking may be inferred from the quality of the company present. We returned to Ambach by moonlight in rowboats. A few notes on some of the new members will be interesting outside Germany, where their personal history is less known than it is at home.

Gabriel Max was born 23rd August, 1840, at Prag; studied there at the Academy from 1855-58, and in Vienna until 1861; returned to his native town; in 1862 surprised the world by a series of thirteen pictures which very effectually, yet fantastically, illustrated pieces of music; from 1863-69 continued his artistic studies at Münich, and has since become, by his various pictures, one of the greatest artists of Germany. His subjects are usually of a weird and mystical character. He is also a great

anthropologist, and owns a splendid ethnographical collection.

Hübbe Schleiden, Juris Utriusque Doctor, was born 20th October, 1846, at Hamburg ; studied jurisprudence and political economy ; was, during the War of 1870-71, an *attaché* of the German Consulate-General in London ; travelled over almost all Europe, and lived in West Africa from 1875-77. He is the author of several very important works, and the author of the German colonial policy, his statesman-like scheme having been adopted by Prince Bismarck, and since carried out by the Kaiser.

Baron Carl du Prel was born 3rd April, 1839, in Landshut (Bavaria) ; studied at the University in Münich ; in 1859 entered the Bavarian military service, which he left in 1872 as Captain. In 1868 he was graduated Doctor Philosophiæ by the University of Tübingen for his magisterial work on dreams, and his fame was constantly enhanced by other books until his lamented death in 1898 ; one of them, *The Philosophy of Mysticism*, which appeared in 1885, has been splendidly translated by my dear friend C. C. Massey.

Such were the men who clustered about me on that green slope by the shore of the sweet lake, which that unfortunate mad king Louis, of Bavaria, loved so romantically and covered with so sad a pall by his suicide in its blue waters. My friendship with them remains unbroken, although two of them have since retired from their membership.

From Münich we passed on to Stuttgardt, Kreuznach, and Heidelberg, where we, of course,

visited the Schloss, the giant wine-tun, and the other sights. We slept at Mainz, and went thence to Kreuznach to pay a visit to Mme. Hæmmerlé. This is a summer resort for invalids, and is very interesting to strangers. They have there an Ozone Kurhaus (Cure house) which is very curious. The walls are of birch twigs piled up on each other between the timbers of a skeleton frame. A fine spray of water is caused to trickle through the twigs from top to bottom, and in evaporating is said to liberate ozone, which serves as a very healing atmosphere for patients with weak lungs. There are baths, fine gardens lit up at night, a splendid band of musicians—one never hears a bad one in Germany—and in the Bazaar numbers of little shops where one can buy at almost nominal prices jewelry and other objects in agate, onyx, carnelian, and the other stones that are found in the neighboring mountains. Countess von Spreti and Frau Max and her sister suddenly turned up, having determined to give us an agreeable surprise. Mr. Rudolph Gebhard and I got them to consent to come on with us to Elberfeld, our faces being now turned in that direction. We all sailed down the Rhine from Mainz to Cologne, and as the day was bright, the steamboat good, and our company congenial, we had a very happy time of it. The cloud of the Missionary plot was not yet visible, but it was approaching.

The Gebhard mansion could contain us all, and the next five days passed away like a bright dream. Dr. Coues, whom we had left behind at Kreuznach, rejoined us on the 15th (August); and on the 17th H. P. B., Mrs. Holloway, Mohini, Bertram Keightley,

and Mrs. and Miss Arundale came in a body from London. I gave up my room to Countess von Spreti, and went over to Mr. Franz Gebhard's villa. Herr Consul G. Gebhard had returned from America, and was the very type of an ideal host. In fact, I never met a more courteous gentleman nor more sympathetic friend. We celebrated his birthday on the 18th with enthusiasm. Mme. Hæmmerlé arrived that day from Kreuznach. On the 19th the Münich ladies left and Dr. Hübbe arrived. Dr. Coues departed on the 20th, and Mme. Hæmmerlé on the 21st. The reader may imagine the tone of conversation that went on during this memorable week, with H. P. B. sparkling like champagne with her witty talk, and everybody contributing his or her best to the enjoyment of the others. Dr. Hübbe, debilitated by severe mental work, left us to go to the Black Forest to recuperate his nervous system in the balsamic air of that vast piney wood. This reminds me that I have omitted mentioning an important incident of my visit to Prof. Gabriel Max.

In the compound of the villa stood some majestic old pine trees, under whose shade it was pleasant to lie and look out upon the lake. It suddenly came to my mind that I had been told that a certain Adept in Tibet is in the habit of lying at the foot of a pine tree, resting his back against the trunk, and so absorbing into his system the pure healing aura of the tree. Now, as I have already said, my nervous system had been pretty effectually drained of vitality by the thousands of sick folk whom I had treated psychopathically, and I did not recuperate; my

general health was perfect, but the ganglia along the spinal tract felt empty ; after five months of rest it was no better. So I tried the tree experiment. It worked like magic, the aura poured through my system, and within two days I was as well as possible.

" H. P. B. savage," is one of my Diary entries of 24th August ; which means that she was in a mood the opposite of mild, and that we all caught our share of the thunderbolts ! She had an attack of rheumatism, poor thing ! besides her regular ailments. On the evening of the 25th there was a letter phenomenon, strange and convincing enough to satisfy even Mr. Rudolph Gebhard, one of the cleverest conjurers in Europe. He described it in his address before the Annual Convention at Adyar in December, 1884, which he attended as a Delegate (*vide* Official Report of that year's Anniversary, p. 111). He said that " from the age of seven he had studied conjuring. At the age of nineteen he went to London, and took lessons from Professor Field, the best sleight-of-hand man there. He had met the leading conjurers of the day and had exchanged tricks with them. He had made a special study of sleight-of-hand. He then gave an interesting account of the dropping of a letter from a picture in the drawing-room of his father's house while Mme. Blavatsky was in the room. The letter was (by request) addressed to the speaker's father, and treated of the exact subject he was thinking about at the time. He offered a reward of Rs. 1,000 to anyone who would repeat the same thing under the same conditions. He was himself an amateur conjurer and had his eyes open ". (Cheers.)

In passing judgment on this incident, one important fact is to be cousidered, *viz.*, that the company present, some twelve or fifteen in number, themselves voted that the letter, if any should come, was to be addressed to Herr G. Gebhard and to be a test to him. They might equally as well have had it addressed to any other person in the room, and as the choice was made only a minute or so before the letter dropped on the piano, it is hard to imagine a more self-evident proof of H. P. B.'s real power to effect these phenomena.

Happily, we have now passed beyond the cycle of psychophysical phenomena of this sort since poor H. P. B.'s death, yet, all the same, they were of the greatest importance at that time, and did more than anything else could have done to focus public attention on the Society and open the way for the diffusion of the ideas of which it was the channel. Prof. Max Müller has done me, personally, a grievous wrong in declaring and repeating in print that in a private conversation between us, at his house in Oxford, I had spoken of false miracles as the natural manure of new religious movements, with the implication that if H. P. B.'s phenomena were of that category it was all right. I cannot lay my hand upon the place where the statement occurs, but I believe he first printed it in the *Nineteenth Century*, and repeated it in a Gifford Lecture, though of this I am not sure. The important fact is that—probably without malevolent intention, and only because he misunderstood my remark—he made me appear to uphold trickery and falsehood as a necessary means for pushing a religious

movement. As we were alone in his library when the conversation occurred, it becomes a question of his memory against mine, and all I can do is to solemnly deny having ever said anything that would bear such a construction, and offset it with the record of my whole life, which in nothing shows me to have been governed by such low principles. My word will go as far as Prof. Müller's with those who know me intimately. What I did say was that "miracles" had attended the birth of all religions, and that when real phenomena had not been forthcoming, the priests usually employed bogus ones as manure for their crops. But that had no reference to the Theosophical movement, and it was only Prof. Müller's hatred of it which caused him to misunderstand me. "You have done nobly," he said, "in helping so much to revive the love for Sanskrit, and the Orientalists have watched the development of your Society with the greatest interest from the commencement. But why will you spoil all this good reputation by pandering to the superstitious fancies of the Hindus, by telling them that there is an esoteric meaning in their Shastras? I know the language perfectly, and I assure you there is no such thing as a Secret Doctrine in it." In reply, I simply told the Professor that every unspoilt (*i.e.*, unwesternised) Pandit throughout all India believed, as we did, in the existence of this hidden meaning; and that, as for the *Siddhis,* I personally knew men who possessed them and whom I had seen exhibit their powers. "Well, then," said my erudite host, "let us change the subject." And we did, and since then, and until his death, he

attacked us and our movement whenever the spirit moved him.

Several other letter phenomena occurred during our stay at Herr Gebhard's house, but I need not relate them, as the one above described will do for all. Among the visitors of H. P. B. was that talented Russian Solovioff, whose book, which appeared long after dear H. P. B.'s death, made it safe for him to tell his falsehoods about her, shows him to be as heartless and contemptible, though fifty times more talented, than the Coulombs. On 1st September he related to all of us the wonderful waking visit he had had from an Adept and the striking phenomena attending it, not as a questionable delusion of the senses, but as an actual experience so perfect and realistic as to banish all theory of doubt. But, as Prof. Max Müller said, "let us change the subject."

## CHAPTER XIV

## THE COULOMB MISSIONARY CONSPIRACY

OUR last chapter brought us up to 1st September. There were more days of sunny friendships and bright surroundings at Elberfeld, but on the 10th day the first growl of the coming tempest was heard, for we received from Adyar a lugubrious letter from Damodar, intimating that the Missionaries were hatching a plot, evidently with the help of Mme. Coulomb. He said that this woman was going about here and there, breathing vengeance against H. P. B. and the Society. The members of the Board of Control, to which I had confided the management of our affairs at Headquarters, became so tired of her and her wretched gossip, that they tried to get her and her husband to go to Colorado, where Dr. Hartmann offered to present them with a gold-mine claim of his. They were both willing and anxious to go, and a day for their sailing, *via* Hong Kong and San Francisco, had been agreed upon, when they spoilt everything by saying that they held compromising letters of H. P. B.'s, and that if they did not receive a bonus of Rs. 3,000, they should give the letters for publication. Of course, that stopped all negotiation ; the Board held a meeting to which the accused were summoned, affidavits of their slanders

were read in their presence, and they were expelled from membership in the Society. Then came a wrangle and contention about their quitting our premises, they contending that Mme. Blavatsky had left her rooms in their custody, and that they should not leave Adyar until an order was received from her to that effect. Under advice of counsel, the Board wrote and cabled H. P. B. to send the required order ; she cabled it back, and at length, after weeks of most disagreeable disturbance, the worthy couple were turned out of the compound, and went and settled themselves at St. Thomé in a house provided for them by the gentle, Christlike Missionaries ! Their bombshell mortar battery was fired off in the September number of their Madras organ, the *Christian College Magazine*, and then they stood by to see the superstructure of the Theosophical Society crumble and bury its founders beneath the ruins. No reasonable person was deceived by the pretence that the employment of the self-discredited Coulombs as tools to attempt our ruin was " in the interest of public morals " ; the partisan spirit underneath the attack shone clearly through. If it had been a question of attacking the leaders of one of the sects of their own religion, it is very doubtful if the interests of public morals would not have been left to take care of themselves ; but when the chance of discrediting the Society which of all others had the strongest hold upon the confidence of the Indian peoples offered itself, the temptation was irresistible, and even such unsavory accomplices as these were paid their price—partly in cash, partly in promises—

and the Rev. Mr. Alexander is said to have served as their literary *chef de cuisine*. Very ably, too.

Naturally enough, so sensational an article achieved instant notoriety ; the Calcutta correspondent of the *Times* cabled its substance to that paper on September 20th, and it very soon became known throughout the whole civilised world. Only by the reaction was it now seen how widespread the interest in our views had become, and it is doubtful if any Society had ever before had to sustain so terrible an attack. It almost seemed as if the very reactive bitterness of public denunciations of Mme. Blavatsky was the strongest proof of the deep impression which her revelations of the existence of the Eastern School of Adepts, their individual characters and spiritual attainments, and the part they play in the progress of our race, had made on the public mind.

Though I have traced the development of this conspiracy to its culmination within a single paragraph, weeks passed between our first warning from Damodar and the appearance of the Calcutta despatches in the *Times*. These were weeks of painful anxiety to us and others, but to H. P. B. herself of strong mental agony. Her supersensitive temperament made her suffer mental tortures proportionate to the length of her enforced inaction. A perfect parallel can be found in the case of my distinguished compatriot J. Fenimore Cooper, the author, of whom his biographer, Prof. Lounsbury, says :

"The extent to which Cooper was affected by hostile criticism is something remarkable, even in

the irritable race of authors. He manifested under it the irascibility of a man not simply thin-skinned, but of one whose skin was raw. Meekness was never a distinguishing characteristic of his nature; and attack invariably stung him into defiance or counter-attack."[1]

What H. P. B. could do under the circumstances, she did. She wrote to the *Times* of October 9th, denouncing the alleged private letters of herself to Mme. Coulomb as forgeries, and in published interviews in the *Pall Mall* and other journals declared her intention of returning to India and prosecuting the Coulombs and the Missionaries for libel. Following her letter to the Editor of the *Times*, appeared one from Mr. St. George Lane-Fox, who had just returned from Madras, and who said that, in common with all who were acquainted with the circumstances of the case, he had "no doubt whatever that, whoever wrote the letters, they were not written by Mme. Blavatsky"; moreover, that he did "not believe that the true Theosophic cause suffers in the slightest degree". The accuracy of this judgment has been abundantly proven by subsequent events, for, as statistics show, the growth and strength of the Theosophic movement have, year by year, been double what they had been up to the moment of the attack.

I have no intention at this late day to flog this dead horse; the public have taken their sides, H. P. B. has cast off the burden of her earthly sorrows, and

[1] *James Fenimore Cooper*, by Thomas R Lounsbury, London, 1884. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.

time is daily vindicating her greatness of character and dignity of life-aims. Her personal faults and weaknesses are well-nigh forgotten, and her reputation now rests upon the books she gave us, whose paramount value is being brought to view after the dust and smoke of the conflict have passed away. In company with Mr. Rudolph Gebhard, I returned to India in the first half of November, and Mme. Blavatsky followed in December, bringing with her Mr. Leadbeater and Mr. and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, of London, and three Delegates from Ceylon, to attend the Annual Convention. Dr. Hartmann and I had joined the party at Colombo, whither I had gone to report to the Sinhalese the grand results of my mission to London in their interest.

Before her departure from Europe, H. P. B. received the most gratifying proofs of the unshaken confidence of our European colleagues in her integrity; the London Lodge and the German and French Branches unanimously adopted resolutions of a complimentary character, and the first two cabled their decisions out to Adyar. Meanwhile letters and telegrams poured into Headquarters from the Indian Branches, and the reports from our colleagues of the Board of Control—all of which are now lying on my table as I write—became bright and reassuring; we felt that the storm had passed without doing us such grievous damage after all.

Landing at Bombay on November 10, I lectured on the 12th, on "Theosophy Abroad," in Framji Cowasji Hall, to a packed audience, and one of the most enthusiastic I ever addressed. Madras was reached

on the 15th, and what sort of reception I had the local papers of the day show. More than 300 students of the very Christian College whose professors had attacked H. P. B., and a large number of our Society members, met me at the station, with cheers, a band of musicians, addresses, garlands, and perfume-sprinklings. Their joy and enthusiasm seemed boundless. The address read to me by the schoolboys is very flowery, but quivers with true affection. In certain of its sentences they touch the very heart of the mystery of the failure of the Missionaries to weaken our hold on the Indian public—for a mystery, indeed, it must have seemed to them. These Indian lads identify the Theosophical Society with the revival of Sanskrit Literature, the reconciliation of Religion with Science, the throwing of light upon man's future state, the welding of the "incohesive" Indian castes and creeds into one brotherhood feeling of mutual sympathy, and the defence of Aryan wisdom and Hindu honor against all critics and all comers. With such convictions as these possessing their minds, and with such thrills of gratitude pulsing through their hearts, the poor conspiracy against H. P. B. and the Blessed Ones was foredoomed to failure—nay, was predestined to do us infinite good instead of infinite harm in the long run. One sees this in the tone of the influential Indian journals of the day. Noticing the return of Mme. Blavatsky and her party, the *Indian Mirror* of December 20, said :

"The Hindu community, in general, is the more attracted to Mme. Blavatsky, because they believe that

the Missionaries have, in reality, attacked the ancient Hindu religion and philosophy under the guise and pretence of exposing the lady's 'trickery'. On that account the feeling of the native community against the Missionaries and for Mme. Blavatsky is very strong."

The *Indian Chronicle* said: "We are not Theosophists ourselves . . . but we have a great respect for the founders of the Theosophical Society. It is the only foreign movement which appeals to the national feeling of India . . . and instead of being made the butt of ridicule, and its leaders the subject of persecution, it ought to be patiently nourished. The Christian scoffers . . . are perhaps not aware that the existence of Mahatmas . . . is universally believed throughout India, and it is preposterous to suppose that the Padris of Madras will do any serious harm to that belief. . . . Theosophy, though it may have to bear much temporary annoyance . . . will come out of the fiery ordeal purer for having gone through it." The *Sahas* of 3rd November expressed the same opinions, saying that the Hindus believed in occult science before we two persons were born, and that this belief—in the case of hundreds, knowledge—cannot be affected by anything that may happen to us. The *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* said that the Christian accusers were incapable of grasping the possibility of facts such as Theosophy dealt with, but the Hindus, knowing Yoga, believe in the Mahatmas implicitly. In trying to discredit the existence of such men, the Missionaries, as the tone of the whole

Indian Press showed, were slapping the faces of, and offering deadly insult to, the whole Indian people.

Her reception at Madras on her return was even more tumultuously joyous than mine had been. She was met at the pier by a large Committee, garlanded, along with her party of fellow-travellers, and escorted in procession to Pachiappah's Hall, where an assemblage that crowded the place to suffocation was waiting. They rose to their feet and gave vent to their feelings in a roar of cheers and vivas, as she slowly walked through the press to the platform, her hand nervously gripping my arm, her mouth set like iron, her eyes full of glad light and almost swimming in tears of joy. The new-comers from London received each a separate ovation also. Mr. C. Ramiah, the Tahsildar of Madras, bade her welcome on behalf of the local Branch ; Judge P. Sreenivas Row requested permission for the address of the Christian College and other College students, bearing some 500 signatures, to be read; and she assenting, it was read by A. G. Krishnaswamy Iyer, a student of the Christian College, amid great excitement. When the outburst of cheering at the end had somewhat subsided, H. P. B. made her first and, so far as I know, only speech from a public platform. She said that " of all the letters published, not a single one, as it stood, had been written by her. She would deny them all *in toto* . . . she would be the greatest fool in the world to commit herself so that she might be fairly accused of such vile, disgusting things. . . . As for her accusers, she and the Colonel had treated them with all possible kindness, and what should she say of their going over to the

enemy's camp, when her back was turned, and selling her like Judas Iscariot? She had not done anything against India of which she should be ashamed, and she was determined to work for India while there was health in her". (Report in the *Madras Mail.*)

Other speeches were made by Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, Mr. Leadbeater, and myself, which were vehemently applauded, and the presentation of garlands and bouquets to H. P. B. and the rest of us terminated the proceedings.

H. P. B. came back fully determined to prosecute the Coulombs and the Missionaries; she had so declared in London and so wrote me from Cairo, where she had stopped some time to collect testimony about the antecedents of the Coulombs. From thence Mr. Leadbeater, then an Anglican curate, or clerk in Holy Orders, wrote to the *Indian Mirror* (issue of December 16) about what he and the others had discovered—facts certainly not much to the credit of these champions of "public morals". He says that the information, derived from the members of Mr. Coulomb's own family, showed that his (Mr. C.'s) wife, formerly a Miss Emma Cutting, had been employed for a short time as governess in the family of S. . . Pasha, "but was expelled from his household upon the discovery that she was endeavoring to instil vicious ideas into the minds of her charge"; that she pretended to be able to see clairvoyantly buried treasures; that several were induced to dig where she told them, but discovered nothing save once, when they found some doubloons—which a little girl had seen her place in the hole the night before.

Mr. Leadbeater further says that he was assured by Mr. Gregoire d'Elias, Vice-Chancellor of the Russian Legation at Cairo, that he knows Mme. Blavatsky intimately, and saw her daily during her (former) stay there, and "esteems her most highly, and has never till now heard the slightest reflection on her moral character". I think we may fairly offset this testimony of a high Russian official against the calumnious falsehoods of an accuser like Mme. Coulomb. And a fair-minded person would be disposed to look with great suspicion upon her statement that Mme. Blavatsky, one of the most brilliant women of her time, had put her reputation so completely in her power as the wretched letters in question would show. Of course, never having seen the letters themselves, nor being as infallible in determining the genuinenesses of handwriting as professionals like Netherclift and Berthelot—the Government expert in the recent Zola trial, who made as ridiculous a failure about Dreyfus's writing as the other did about Parnell's—I cannot express any opinion as to their genuineness ; moreover, since poor H.P.B. is dead, the truth will never be known[1] ; but I can and do so say, for the hundredth time, that I have had numberless proofs of H. P. B.'s occult powers, of the clear altruism of her motives, and the moral purity of her life ; and I thrust those old scrap-books

[1] In his *Leaves from a Life*, p. 263, Mr. Montague Williams, Q. C., says that in a case in which he appeared, Netherclift and Chabot swore positively to a writing as that of a certain man, and it was proved to be by quite another one : that their evidence from handwriting is quite worthless. "In fact," he says, "in my opinion they are utterly unreliable."

and bundles of letters and papers back into their boxes, with the sense of relief that one feels on putting out of sight a loathsome thing. Yet not until I have shown *why* H. P. B. never redeemed her promise to prosecute the Coulombs; for that fact has been used ever since to her discredit, and most unjustly. Fortunately, it is all a matter of record. For it, we must now turn to the Annual Report of the T.S. for the year 1884.[1]

She sent me from Cairo the following cable: "Success complete. Outlaws. Legal proofs. Sail Colombo, *Navarino*." The meaning of this is that she had what she regarded as legal proofs of the fact that the Coulombs were outlaws who had fled the country to escape arrest for fraudulent bankruptcy. This I learnt on reading the written statements of reputable witnesses which she brought with her; statements which, however suggestive as to the line of inquiry that should be followed up in case the matter should come to trial, I saw at once were not in form for production in Court. Acting without legal advice, she had made a mess of the affair. From the day she landed, she kept urging me to take her to a judge, or solicitor, or barrister, no matter which, for her to file her affidavit and begin our action, but I positively refused. I told her that within the next few days the Convention would meet, and that our paramount duty was to lay her case before the Delegates, have a special Committee formed, of our ablest lawyers, and let them decide what steps she should take; that she

[1] Cf. also my article on the death of H. P. B. in *Theosophist* for August, 1891.

and I had so merged our personalities into the Society, that we ought not to move until we should know the wish of our colleagues. She fretted and stormed and insisted, but I would not stir from my position, and, when she threatened to go by herself and "wipe this stain off her character," I said that I should, in that case, resign my office and let the Convention decide between us : I knew too much about legal practice to do any such foolish thing. She then yielded.

The Convention met in due course on the 27th, and in my Presidential Address I laid the matter before it. The following paragraphs will be pertinent to our present narrative :

"With regard to the proper course for Madame Blavatsky to adopt in the matter of a lawsuit, there is a difference of opinion among her friends. She herself naturally feels anxious to go to Court with her proofs, and have her accusers punished. That was her first thought when we received the news in London, and I am not aware of her having changed her opinion. Some of her friends and all her enemies also urge it. Her assailants especially display a very eager and unanimous, not to say suspicious, anxiety for her to do so. But the vast majority of our members throughout the world have expressed a decided objection to this course. Their opinion is that, do what our counsel may, it will be impossible to avoid having the trial of Madame Blavatsky's reputation turned into a trial of the truth of the Esoteric Philosophy and of the existence of the Mahatmas, and, as these are subjects the most sacred,

not only to Hindus but to occultists of all religions . . . the prospect is shocking to their feelings. They represent that, in view of the angry prejudice against us among the Anglo-Indians as a class, the utmost latitude is likely to be given to opposing counsel to ask the most insulting questions, and goad to desperation our witnesses, especially Madame Blavatsky, whose extreme nervousness and excitability all know. This strictly within the limits of legal practice, and without our having any redress. I have the written opinions of eminent London counsel upon this point, which will be submitted for your consideration. In face of this divergence of opinion, and in deference to the views of so many of the leading men in our Society, I have represented to Madame Blavatsky that it is her duty to be governed by the sense of the General Council and not undertake to decide for herself. . . . If for (the Society's) sake we should be required to sacrifice even our lives, we ought to be ready to do it without a moment's hesitation. And, finally, I have insisted that the present imbroglio shall be unreservedly laid before a special Committee of the best lawyers and judicial officers, selected from among the Delegates, who shall be required to examine persons and papers, and submit their recommendations for the decision of the Convention before its final adjournment ; she to hold herself ready to sue or not to sue her traducers, as the Convention may order. To this she has with some reluctance finally consented."

A Committee was chosen, and, before the adjournment, duly reported as follows :

"*Resolved*: That the letters published in the *Christian College Magazine* under the heading "Collapse of Koot Hoomi," are only a pretext to injure the cause of Theosophy; and as these letters necessarily appear absurd to those who are acquainted with our philosophy and facts, and as those who are not acquainted with those facts could not have their opinion changed even by a judicial verdict given in favor of Madame Blavatsky, therefore it is the unanimous opinion of this Committee that Madame Blavatsky should not prosecute her defamers in a Court of Law. Signed by Norendro Nath Sen,[1] *Chairman*; A. J. Cooper-Oakley,[2] *Secretary*; Franz Hartmann, M.D.; S. Ramaswamier[3]; Naoroji Dorabji Khandalavala[4]; H. R. Morgan, Major-General; Gyanendranath Chakravarti, M.A.[5]; Nobin K. Bannerji[6]; T. Subba Row[7]; P. Sreenivasrow[8]; P. Iyaloo Naidu[9]; Rudolph Gebhard; R. Raghoonath Row[10]; S. Subramania Iyer.[11] The high character and competency of this Committee cannot be questioned, and if a client is ever justified in acting in legal

[1] Editor, *Indian Mirror*, Honorary Magistrate, Calcutta: now a Member of the Legislative Council

[2] M.A. (Cantab.); now Registrar, Madras University.

[3] District Registrar, Madura.

[4] Judge.

[5] Formerly Professor of Mathematics, Allahabad; now Inspector of Schools.

[6] Deputy Collector and Magistrate.

[7] B.A., B.L., Pleader, High Court, Madras.

[8] Judge.

[9] Deputy Collector (Ret.).

[10] Deputy Collector, Madras, formerly Prime Minister, Indore.

[11] Since kinghted by H.M. Government, and now a Justice of the High Court, Madras.

matters under the advice of counsel, assuredly H. P. B. was in this case.

In the course of the debate upon the above Report of the Committee, Babu Norendronath Sen cited the case of an action for libel brought by his cousin, the late Keshab Chunder Sen, and said that "the position of plaintiff in an Indian libel case is much worse than that of defendant". This was his professional experience as a Solicitor of many years' standing. Judge Khandalavala said that, after giving the Coulomb letters a careful study, he was convinced that the one in which his own name occurred was "a perfect forgery". General Morgan said that, for reasons stated, he believed that the whole series of letters were forgeries. Judge Sreenivasrow narrated the circumstances which attended his own receipt of Mahatmic letters, and which made a deep impression on his audience; finally, he felt convinced that there was no legal proof of the genuineness of the letters in Mme. Coulomb's possession: "at the best it is but a matter of opinion." Mr. (now High Court Judge) S. Subramania Iyer's remarks were full of the luminous impartiality and common sense which have elevated him to his present position on the Bench.

"From my experience," he said, among other things, "I know the difficulty of proving the genuineness of letters in a Court of Law, a difficulty which has existed in cases in which I have been engaged myself. It is merely a question of opinion, and I would ask if it is not better to form such an opinion from the evidence embodied in a pamphlet than by the surrender of one's judgment to the verdict of a

Court of Justice. The question is whether this Society, putting itself forward as a Society for the promotion of peace and order, is justified in making an appeal to a Court of Justice in this matter. I think that every reasonable man is at liberty to form an opinion on the evidence placed before him . . . without going into a Court of Justice in which results are very often contrary to the truth. If Theosophy has only strength in itself, I consider it will survive such difficulties. . . . We cannot bind Madame Blavatsky, but as a member of our Society I do not think it is the proper course for us to give the world the spectacle of a spiteful cross-examination. Many are insisting that it will be necessary, *simply because it would make an interesting trial*, but as sober men engaged in spreading the truth, we ought to take a different view."

Other speakers took part in the discussion, and, the question being put to vote, " the Report of the Committee was then unanimously adopted by acclamation. Three cheers were then given for Madame Blavatsky, who was deeply (and very naturally) affected by this fresh proof of affectionate confidence." On her appearance the next evening before the audience of 1,500 persons who attended the celebration of the Society's ninth anniversary, she was cheered to the echo, and every allusion to her in the speeches of the several speakers aroused great enthusiasm.

One fact, reported confidentially by a very respected colleague of ours, made a deep impression on the minds of the Committee. He had overheard a conversation between two influential Madras civilians about

Madame Blavatsky and the charges against her. In reply to a question by one of them as to what would be likely to happen, the other said : " I hope she *will* bring an action, for . . . who must try it, is determined to give the greatest latitude for cross-examination so that this d——d fraud may be shown up, and it is not at all impossible that she may be sent to the Andaman Islands." Of course, this was equivalent to saying that the case was already prejudged, and that H. P. B. would not have a chance of getting justice. What it was that was calculated upon seemed pretty clear from the fact that when the Missionaries saw that H. P. B. had been kept from walking into the trap, they caused Mme. Coulomb to bring an action for libel against General Morgan, intending to subpœna H. P. B. as a witness and cross-examine her, but immediately withdrew it when she was sent away to Europe by her attending physician, as will hereafter appear. Their anticipated victory proved a defeat ; H. P. B.'s persecution doubled the love felt for her by the Hindus and her foreign colleagues ; and they were left with their disreputable informer on their hands. The Rev. Mr. Patterson, " Editor, *Christian College Magazine*," in the *Madras Mail* of 6th May, 1885, appealed to the public for money to send them to Europe, " as the genuineness of the Blavatsky letters may now be considered (by them ?) settled, and there is therefore no longer any necessity for M. and Mme. Coulomb to remain in India. . . . They are penniless, and it is impossible for them to earn a livelihood in this country. . . . They are not without some claim upon the consideration of the

public. . . . There are many who, feeling that *a good work has been done*, will be willing to contribute, etc." He acknowledges receipt of the following sums: The Rt. Rev. the Bishop of Madras, Rs. 50; the Hon. H. S. Thomas, Rs. 100; the Rev. Dr. Miller, Rs. 100; the Rev. J. Cooling, B.A., Rs. 10. Poor Missonaries! poor Coulombs! This was their last resource, after the ghastly failure of a lecture scheme, in which the Coulombs—personally conducted—were to have made the grand tour, showing up the fraudulent tricks of H. P. B., with accessories of bladders, muslin, wigs, and pulling-strings. The one trial given them at the (Missionary) Memorial Hall, Madras, was such a fiasco that it was never repeated, and the poor traitors sank gradually out of sight into their congenial mud. Up to that time the Society had chartered 95 Branches in all the world, up to last December (1897) it had chartered 492.[1] Evidently the crumbling which was expected to follow the Coulomb episode did not happen: the engineer was "hoist with his own petard".

While the party were in Colombo, *en route* for Madras, an interesting episode occurred. The Rev. Mr. Leadbeater, with H. P. B. and myself acting as sponsors, "took *Pansil*" from the High Priest Sumangala and Rev. Amaramoli, in the presence of a crowded audience. This was the first instance of a Christian clergyman having publicly declared himself a follower of the Lord Buddha, and the sensation caused by it may be easily imagined.

As we are not likely to have to recur to the Coulomb scandal in any detail, it is proper that I

[1] Up to the close of 1902 we had issued 714 charters.

should say what its actual effects were upon us. We have seen that the growth of the Society, as a whole, was quickened to an unexpected degree, and I must also add that very few individual resignations of members were sent in. Yet, so far as the great public is concerned, undoubtedly both H. P. B. and the movement were for a long time under a cloud. It is so much easier to think ill of others than to judicially decide upon their merits and shortcomings, and "where much mud is thrown against a public person, some of it always sticks": a venerable truism. Until the attacks of the Coulombs and the S. P. R. were made, H. P. B. was simply an exceptional, eccentric, and brilliant woman *sans pareil*; after that, she was as one who had been arraigned before a Scottish jury and dismissed with the verdict "Not proven," which was very different from "Not guilty". Among our members were quite a number, and some influential ones, who had acquired doubts of her perfect innocence, yet excused her in their minds for the sake of the public benefits and private consolations she had given.[1] We were still under the spell of phenomena-hunting, and to have doubt cast on H. P. B.'s phenomena was to shake the whole superstructure—that now solid edifice of Theosophy which settled on its base later on. My correspondence

[1] This same charity has been extended to W. Q. Judge, whose guilt was much more capable of proof. One might almost fancy the author of these lines had poor H. P. B. in mind when writing them:

> "A thousand blacker names, worse calumnies,
> All wit can think and pregnant spite devise.
> Strike home, gash deep, no lies nor slander spare;
> A wound, though cured, yet leaves behind a scar."

shows the existence of this feeling of gloom and unrest, and in my succeeding chapters it will be shown how I handled the situation. As these nineteen years have gone by since that tragical 1884, the relation of H. P. B. to the movement has greatly changed, and for the better. She is now remembered and appreciated, not so much as the thaumaturge, but as the devoted agent of the Elder Brothers for the spreading of long-hidden truth to modern times. As time goes on this will be more and more so, and in the growing effulgence of this new day the shadows cast about her martyr personality will melt away and the calumnies of her foolish foes be forgotten, as are those libels against Washington which were so rife in his lifetime. For she was the herald of truth and, as Bacon said: "the sun, though it passes through dirty places, yet remains as pure as before." He might have added: "it illumines the faces of those who stand in its glory."

## CHAPTER XV

## FIRST VISIT TO BURMA

THE attendance of Delegates at the Convention of 1884 was double that of the preceding year, and the feeling exceptionally enthusiastic. The first gold medal of the Subba Row Fund was awarded to Judge P. Sreenivasrow, of Madras, for a very able paper on the identity of two great personages as traced in the Puranas. The Convention adjourned *sine die* on 31st December, and the Delegates gradually departed for their homes, some of them 1,500 miles distant. The last left on 8th January (1885), and the house settled down to its normal quiet. During the night before I was visited by Dj. K.—then an advanced pupil, now a Master—who talked with me about sundry persons and things. Mr. Leadbeater, who had at that time all his great spiritual enlightenment before him, sleeping on another *charpai* in the same room, heard the two voices and saw a column of light by my bedside, but could not distinguish the form of my visitor. On the following night—as my Diary entry states—"H. P. B. got from her Teacher the plan for her *Secret Doctrine*, and it is excellent. Oakley and I tried our hands at it yesterday, but this is much better." Meanwhile, the accumulation of

materials for the book had long been going on. It will be news to some that this was not originally intended to be a new book, but only a recasting and amplification of *Isis Unveiled*, with the late T. Subba Row, B.A., B.L., as co-editor with H. P. B. As first advertised in the *Theosophist*, it was to have been issued in monthly parts of 77 pages each, and to have run to about twenty parts. This new scheme, given her by her Teacher, changed this programme, and the gradual building up of the present grand work was the result.

One night, about this time, H. P. B., unsolicited, produced for Dr. Hartmann a caricature sketch of a woman whose double, leaving the body, is waited for by a devil ; while the divine ray of the Atma escapes. "Dr. H. says"—notes my Diary—"that the picture answers a question that has been mooted in his mind for several days past, and has a significance of which H. P. B. is not aware." Just so : *perhaps*.

The late King of Burma, Theebaw III, having heard of my work for Buddhism from an Italian official at Mandalay, a member of our Society, had invited me to his Court for conversation about the Ceylon Buddhist movement, and in the month of January, just after the Convention above described, I sailed for Rangoon with Mr. Leadbeater to help me in my general work. We had an easy time of it until we got abreast of Monkey Point just at the lower end of the city, where the current of the Irrawady ran like a mill-race, and our poor, broken-down old steamer, the "Asia," had to come to an anchor and wait for high-water. At last, however, we reached the

jetty, and I was received by a Burmese gentleman on behalf of a well-known English official, one of our members. He found us hospitable quarters at the private house of the late Moung Htoon Oung, an advocate and an enlightened man. The same evening our reception-rooms were crowded with the "Elders" (I forget the Burmese name) of the Buddhist community, who plied us with questions and evinced an appreciative and friendly spirit. The next morning Oo Nyoung, Municipal Commissioner, came and escorted us to the golden-domed Shway Dagôn, the finest and most revered pagoda in the Indo-Chinese countries. It is built on a spur of the Pegu hills, and the platform is in part artificially constructed of numberless baskets of earth, brought as an act of piety by Buddhist pilgrims from all parts of the country. The bell-shaped dagoba, gilded from base to apex with gold-leaf at a cost of over a lac of rupees, given by the people, is a resplendent object to one who approaches the city by steamer. When the sun shines on it the effect is very grand indeed[1]: one might fancy it the pharos of the mythic Jerusalem the Golden. It stands upon the upper of two terraces, which rises 166 feet from the level of the ground, and has diameters of 900 by about 700 feet. At the two sides of the foot of the grand staircase stand monster leogryphs, built of brick covered with plaster and gaudily painted. The ascent is very tedious, but, reaching the top, one finds himself on a great flagged

[1] For a full description of Shway Dagohn (Dagôn) Payah, see Shway Yeo's *The Burman*, p. 193, and many other books on Burma.

open space which runs all around the pagoda, and on special days is thronged by a multitude of worshippers, picturesque in costume and colors beyond any other crowd I ever saw. The dagoba stands on an octagonal plinth pierced at four sides with worshipping chambers or temples, each of which enshrines one large and many small statues of the sitting Buddha lit up by thousands of candles, and resounds with the hum of voices of devotees reciting the Five Precepts. Smaller and larger dagobas, chapels, image-houses, bells, and carved figures of lions and other animals are seen around the edges of the platform. One of the bells is so large that six men can stand inside, it being 7 feet $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches across the mouth and weighs 94,628 lbs. (*op. cit.*, 197). It is the third largest bell in the world, and has a history that is worth reading.

From its eight-sided plinth springs the gold-covered pagoda, whose perimeter is 1,355 feet and height 370. Think what a grand object must be this ovoid structure or hillock of masonry enveloped with gold on a bright, sunny day! But I shall not give time to mere architectural details when they can be so easily gotten from Shway Yeo's charming volumes on Burma. The peculiar sanctity of the Shway Dagôn is due to the fact that "it is the only payah known to Buddhists which contains actual relics, not only of Shin Gautama, but of the three Budhs who preceded him in this world". In the relic chamber, in the heart of the dagoba, are said to be eight hairs from the head of Gautama Sakhya Muni, and the drinking-bowl of one, the robe of another, and the staff of a third preceding Buddha. Whatever be the fact, the assertion is believed

throughout Burma, Siam, Cambodia, and Corea, from all which countries pilgrims swarm to pay their homage. Its actual historical date is not easily fixed, for, though Buddhist authorities assert it to have been built in 588 B.C., yet, as Shway Yeo says, it may have been sacred for cycles upon cycles, if it contains relics of the Buddha's predecessors. The pagoda is crowned with a *htee*, or umbrella, one of the emblems of sovereignty. It is an iron, cage-like structure, gilded and hung all over with gold and silver jewelled bells "which tinkle melodiously with every breath of air". Mr. Oo Nyoung introduced me to various important personages connected with the pagoda, and arrangements were made for me to lecture there on Buddhism.

The news of my arrival having been spread, I very soon was visited by large numbers of both Burmese and resident Hindus, coming to discuss their respective religions. January 24 was a very busy day. I had a three hours' interview with the Tha-tha-na-bang, or Buddhist Archbishop, so to say, from Mandalay, and, later, the house full of Burmese and Hindus, each in a separate room, and Leadbeater and I going from one group to the other, discussing now Buddhism with one, and then Hinduism with the other party. On Sunday, the 25th, I lectured in Krisnam Koïl on "Hindu Religion, its Enemies and Friends". A band of native Christian rowdies attended, and by their bad behavior created great excitement. There was every prospect of a hand-to-hand fight, with bloodshed, but I managed to stop it. My throat was, however, the worse for the excessive

use of my voice at the lecture and in the interminable discussions with our visitors.

I had the opportunity for seeing a number of instructive mesmeric experiments here, by a private gentleman named Moody, upon Indian subjects. I have notes of a series involving the question of thought-transference which were tried at my suggestion. They were made with a pocket-handkerchief. The operator having brought his subject into the state of suggestibility, stood before him holding a white handkerchief in his hands. Recognising its nature and normal color at first, he subsequently saw it, without any spoken orders, as red, blue, green, yellow, purple, black, brown, or whatsoever other color I whispered in the operator's ear. The color sensation underwent an instantaneous change when the mesmeriser visualised in his own mind the color designated by me. We also proved the community of taste and feeling betwen mesmeriser and subject, by the usual experiments of making the former, with his back turned towards the subject, taste successively sugar, quinine, ginger, salt, venegar, etc., etc., and by pricking or pinching him, every taste and every physical sensation being immediately reproduced in the subject. To a reflective mind this field of mesmeric research produces most serious thoughts ; there is something so awesome in the idea that two human beings can be thus identified as to mental and physical action. Such an experiment is, in fact, a key that unlocks awful mysteries.

My first lecture at Shway Dagôn was given on 27th January in a crimson-and-gold rest-house,

beautifully carved outside and intoxicating with color inside. *Pansil*, or the Five Precepts, was first given by a Burmese priest, some introductory remarks were made, and I was then given speech. I spoke for an hour, but, as three interpreters had to translate me by turns, I very much doubt if my huge audience got a very clear idea of what I said. The scene, however, vividly appealed to my artistic sense, and I took in the whole picture piece-meal, while keeping an attentive ear upon my interpreters to see if they seemed to be rendering, if not my words, at least my ideas, correctly. For one of average intuitiveness of temperament can do so much by thought-reading, even though ignorant of the vernacular employed. My reasoned discourse finished, I was put through a public examination in Buddhistic theology and metaphysics by several priests, and pronounced satisfactory. I don't wonder at their taking precautions before giving me their confidence, considering what a marvel, almost an impossibility, it must have seemed to them that a *pucca* white man (that is, a pure-blooded not a mixed-blooded one) should come and, at that sacred shrine, in open day and in the presence of thousands of Burmans, avow himself a Buddhist from conviction, without ulterior motive. In fact, this suspicion followed us for years in Asia, and we had to live it down before we won the sure place in the confidence of the Asiatic peoples which we now hold.

At 1.27 a.m. in the following night I was awakened by a telegraph peon who brought me this despatch from Damodar : " Return at once, Upasika (H. P. B.)

dangerously ill." It was a thunderclap out of a clear sky. "Poor old chum!" my Diary says. "No more sleep for me that night." I spent the time in perfecting plans for carrying on the Burma mission. At an early hour I went with Leadbeater to carry the bad news to our dear Mrs. Gordon, of Calcutta, then in Rangoon on a visit to her adopted daughter. After that to a Buddhist meeting where I was engaged to speak; then to bid farewell to the Mandalay Archbishop; and then, at 11 a.m., to the steamer "Oriental" in which I sailed for Madras. Leadbeater was left behind to go on with the work.

My older colleagues will have no trouble in figuring to themselves my state of mind while on that sea voyage. Here were we two with our vast work not yet even shaped out, the Society still staggering under the blow struck by the Missionaries; for, while we were floating along on the full tide of our co-workers' sympathy, yet outside our ship, to borrow the metaphor, the billows of angry outside hatred and suspicion were swelling, and foaming, and dashing against it all around. With us together and united, each supplying what the other lacked, and linked together in one intense thought of service to man, there was nothing to fear for the future, our cause had in it the spirit of victory. But with her stricken down, perhaps lying on her bed of death, perhaps doomed to die before I could get back to receive her last word and close her eyes, how heavy my heart must have been needs no seventh son of a seventh son to comprehend. No wonder I wrote in my Diary, when the ship was running through a

silvery sea : " My poor Chum, and is thy life of adventure, of anguish, of violent contrasts and of unswerving devotion to Humanity, ended ? Alas, my loss will be greater than if thou hadst been wife, or sweetheart, or sister ; for now must I carry alone the immense burden of this responsibility with which the Holy Ones have charged us."

The transit across the Bay of Bengal was as calm as a summer yachting voyage, and passed without incident, beyond my being spied out by Hindu friends at Bimlipatam, and taken ashore and made to lecture that evening. We reached Madras at 4 p.m. on 5th February ; I hurried home and found H. P. B. in a state between life and death, with congestion of the kidneys, rheumatic gout, and an alarming loss of vitality. Added to this, an enfeebled action of the heart had brought her to a crisis where her life trembled in the balance. She was so delighted to see me that she put her arms around my neck, as I came to her bedside, and wept on my breast. I was unspeakably glad to be there to, at least, bid her farewell and assure her of my steadfastness. Her attending physicians, Dr. Mary Scharlieb and Dr. Franz Hartmann, M.D., said it was simply a miracle that she was alive. Our Teacher had worked the wonder by coming one night when they were waiting for her last gasp, laying his hand on her, and snatching her back from death. Wonderful woman ! This same thing happened with her at Philadelphia, when Dr. Pancoast told her that her leg must be cut off to save her life ; but she was out of the house the very next day, with her

mortifying limb cured. Readers of the first volume of these O. D. L. reminiscences will recall the facts. She hung in this state the next four days, we at first not knowing whether she would live a year or years, or suddenly die from syncope. As her strength served we talked over the situation, and she rejoiced in my promise of undying loyalty to the cause we represented. But I was not left to commune with her in peace. Mr. Lane-Fox had returned from London, and he and Hartmann and the other newcomers had put their heads together, and hatched a scheme for what was simply my putting aside, and the transfer of the governing power to a Committee, composed mainly of themselves. It was an ungracious and ungrateful project, and I revolted at once. They had even got poor H. P. B. to sign the papers, which they formally handed me (and which, you may be sure, I have in the box of archives for that year). When I went to her with the paper, and asked her if it coincided with her sense of justice that I, who had watched over and built up the Society from its first germ until now, should be turned out on the road to go hang, without a word of thanks or even so much as the "chit," or character certificate, one gives to the rest-house keeper after a day's stay, or to the *dhobie* (washerman) or one's water-boy; she moaned out that she had signed something they had brought to her dying-bed, and which they said was very important for the Society, but she never understood it to mean what I described, and that she repudiated any such ingratitude. She told me to tear the papers, but I said no, I should keep them as the

story of an episode that might be useful to the future historian. So it passed. While we two were talking, H. P. B. got a note from our Guru in a phenomenal way, saying that she might assure Subba Row and Damodar that, upon her dying, the link between the T. S. and the Masters should *remain unbroken*. A promise which has been amply fulfilled.

By the 10th H. P. B. was about again, and so much better that, when a telegram came from Leadbeater urging my return to Rangoon as there was a very promising opening for the T. S., she consented to my going. So I sailed on the "Oriental" on the 11th. My "Chum" wept when we parted, and I should too if I had thought it was for the last time, but my mind was now completely reassured on that point. The recollection that she would not be permitted to die before her work was accomplished and somebody was ready to fill the gap she would leave, came back to me. I had forgotten that in my momentary grief at the thought of parting from her.

Mr. Leadbeater, with deputations of Burmese Elders and Hindus, received me at the jetty at Rangoon on my arrival on 19th February. On the following day I paid my respects to the late beloved and respected Bishop Bigandet, author of *The Legend of Gaudama*, one of the most authoritative books on Southern Buddhism. His sweet manners and noble character had earned for him the confidence and homage of all educated Burmese as well as of all Christians. We had a most agreeable talk together about Buddhism and its literature. He was past seventy and quite feeble. He expressed his regret

that he should never be able to bring out another book, and, although I offered to supply him with a secretary to whom he might dictate according to his strength, he sadly shook his head and said that his work was all but finished, and the affairs of the world were receding from his sight. With that perfect courtesy of an old French courtier of the time of the Louis, he said it was now my turn to supply this want, and when I protested my incapacity, shook his finger at me and smilingly said he could not accept that excuse, since he had read my *Buddhist Catechism* and there was no more useful book on the religion of Sakhya Muni. Of course I put that down to his amiable politeness, but his manner was so charming that I could only answer by my blushes. He was a tall, spare man of graceful carriage, with white, small hands and small feet, and wore the episcopal purple cassock with red buttons, a long gold chain and cross, and the ring of his episcopal rank. When I took my leave he insisted on accompanying me downstairs to the gate, and after a final exchange of kind expressions we parted—for ever, for I never saw him again.

The next day we breakfasted in the Burmese fashion, on the floor, at a Burmese rest-house, and later received the calls of several European gentlemen interested in Mesmerism, to whom I showed a variety of experiments in thought-control. A large Committee of English and Pali native scholars sat the next day to complete a revision of the Burmese translation of the *Buddhist Catechism*, and accomplished it after some hours of work. Some 20,000 copies were subscribed for on the spot for

gratuitous distribution, and the Elders showed quite an enthusiasm about the affair. After the adjournment Leadbeater and I called on Messrs. Duncan and Badelier, two new acquaintances, and I received the former into membership along with eight others. On Monday following I lectured in the Town Hall on "Theosophy No Sect" to a large audience including Missionaries, and later organised the "Rangoon T.S.," a Hindu Branch with all Tamil members. On the Wednesday we dined at Mr. Duncan's, where we witnessed and assisted in some very instructive mesmeric experiments. I recollect one which recalls some narratives in Baron Du Potêt's classical work *La Magie Dévoilée*. In the centre of the drawing-room stood a large round table, and the company sat against the walls all around the room. The subject, a Hindu servant, being in another room where he could hear nothing of our conversation, I asked Mr. Duncan to draw on the floor with his finger an imaginary line from the table outward, and will that the subject should not be able to cross it. The company present chose the place where the line should be drawn, and then Mr. Duncan, approaching his finger tips to the carpet, but without touching it, willed that his subject should not be able to pass the invisible barrier. The subject was then sent for. On entering, he was told to walk around the table twice, after which he would be told what next to do. He began the circumambulation, and went on well enough until he came to the enchanted spot, when he suddenly stopped, tried to lift one foot to step forward, failed, shrank back, and said he couldn't go farther. Why? "Why,

don't you see that line of fire ; how could I get past it ? " he answered. I told him there was nothing there ; to try again. It was quite useless, he could not advance an inch until Mr. Duncan, who had all this while been standing silent, made a dispersive sweep with his hand and said " All right ! " when " Tommy " completed the circuit of the table. He described it to me as a low wall of flames about six inches high.

Our preliminary discussions with the Burmese finally resulted in the formation of the " Shway Dagôn T. S.," a Buddhist Branch. They were very urgent that I should stop in Burma at least a couple of months to organise the movement, and it was really desirable, but the claims on my time elsewhere forbade it and I had to decline. I told them they must get on as best they could, on the lines I laid out for them.

Saturday, 28th February, was a great holiday with the Burmese, as the anniversary of the Buddha's alleged descent from the Tusita heaven into his mother's womb under the form of a white elephant ! We went again to Shway Dagôn and saw a great crowd of pilgrims. Meetings, talks, and Branch reunions engaged us during the next few days. Meanwhile, I was collecting the opinions of the most respectable Elders about King Theebaw, with the result that I decided that I should not accept his invitation to Mandalay, as he was a monster of vice and cruelty, and his motive in asking me was not to satisfy his thirst for religious knowledge, but only to gratify an idle curiosity to see the white Buddhist. I had too much respect for the dignity of the Society

and its President to put myself on show before a debauched tyrant, and sacrifice my American self-respect by kow-towing to him, merely on the chance of getting a costly ruby ring, or a sum of money, some expensive silken cloths, or such-like toys. So I sent word to that effect to our Italian colleague through whom the King's message had been transmitted, and when, a few days later, I was urged to reconsider by King Theebaw's local agent and another Burmese noble, I held my ground and gave my reasons with perfect frankness. I am not sure, but I think that at heart even the Burmans respected me for my independence.

The incoming Madras Mail brought us disagreeable news. Hartmann reported that the Central Committee at Adyar had resigned, and some Branches would dissolve if H. P. B.'s case were not made good against the Padris. H. P. B., with her usual inconsistency, reproached me for having prevented her—as she said, although it was not I but the Convention who had done it—from bringing suit against them ; and copies were sent me of the latest Missionary pamphlet against us. As I wrote in my Diary, there was "something hostile in the air". How true is that expression—so-and-so is "in the air" ; for assuredly we are constantly acted upon by currents, mental, moral, spiritual, and physical, that are set flowing by our fellow-men. So, likewise, are others acted upon by our own thought-currents—as we now all have been taught by our advanced students in occultism. The next day came a cable from Adyar that H. P. B. had had a relapse and I

must cut short my projected tour in Burma and Bengal, and come back at once. With that exhilarating intelligence on my mind, I had to lecture in the evening to an audience of 1,000 in the Town Hall. The dear Missionaries had a fellow posted at the door to sell the above-mentioned pamphlet, and I saw many in the hands of my auditors ; but nothing is so bracing as a savage opposition, and nothing so stirs up all the resisting power one has in him. I took the adversary by the throat, so to say, and shook him, and made my sympathetic Burmese and Hindu hearers join together in peals of applause. I don't believe our esteemed enemies made *much* profit out of their speculation of importing this poisoned weapon to use against us.

We had already a Buddhist and a Hindu Branch in Rangoon ; I had now to form one of Europeans and Eurasians interested in Mesmerism and practical Psychology in general. I gave it the name of the "Irrawady T. S."

A second urgent telegram came the next day, but I could not get a steamer until the following day, the 11th, when I sailed in the "Himalaya" for Madras. The Captain, Mr. Allen, was an old acquaintance, having commanded the "Chanda" in 1880, when H. P. B. and I returned from Colombo to Bombay. Having a day at command before sailing, I profited by a visit from Mr. Duncan to our house, to make further and better mesmeric experiments on his boy "Tommy". The boy was made to sit with his back against the wall of the room, just beside a large French window opening

on a sunny verandah ; his mesmeriser, Mr. Duncan, stood facing him, with a white handkerchief in his hands ; I stood in the verandah, out of Tommy's range of vision, with a book of samples of bright-colored papers, used by book-binders and others. Mr. Duncan would say to Tommy, showing the handkerchief : " What is this ? " " A handkerchief." " Color ? " " White." I would then show Duncan, say, a red paper, and he, still holding the handkerchief out to Tommy, would repeat : " Color ? " " Red," the boy would answer. So color after color would be silently shown to the mesmeriser, and the next moment he mentally imparted it to the linen handkerchief, and it was seen by the hypnotised subject. This was, I fancy, about as fine a proof of the possibility of thought-transference as can be found on record.

While in Paris in the October preceding, Mr. Rudolph Gebhard and I had been present on the 18th at some mesmeric experiments of M. Robert, the well-known *masseur-magnétiseur*, on one of his clairvoyant subjects. Among other things, the latter told us that he saw us sailing in a steamer on a far-off sea ; a man falling overboard ; the steamer stopped ; a boat put out, and the steamer sailing in a circle. That sounded queer, as neither of us recollected the evident fact that a vessel, especially a steamer, usually does sail in a circle to pick up a person who has gone overboard ; however, I made a note of it at the time, and it now came vividly back to me, for, while crossing the Bay of Bengal on March 14, a Hindu deck passenger fell overboard, and the " Himalaya " sailed in a circle to

pick him up. The coming event of March had, therefore, cast its astral shadow before it on the clairvoyant brain, five months in advance of its happening. I reported the fact to M. Robert by letter at the time, and he can confirm it to anybody who may have the curiosity to ask him to let them see my letter.

We touched at the usual coast ports, among them Coconada, Subba Row's native place, where I went ashore and organised the local Branch T. S. which still survives. Our steamer landed us at Madras on 19th March, and on reaching Headquarters I "found Atra Cura enthroned and everything looking bad". But we need not sail into that cloud-bank just as we have reached port. Leave it for the next chapter.

## CHAPTER XVI

## H. P. B. LEAVES FOR EUROPE

YES, indeed, Black Care was enthroned at Adyar when I got back from Rangoon ; the very moral atmosphere was dark and heavy ; H. P. B. was struggling for life and as vehement as an enmeshed lioness ; while certain of the European new-comers were displaying a special talent for meddling with the Headquarters' business, plotting to have me reduced to subjection to a faddish Central Committee, in which I should not have the least influence and keeping my quasi-dying "Chum" in a perpetual state of nervous explosion. Brief mention was made of this matter in Chapter XV, but it is important enough for extension. The wonder is she did not die before I could get there and fight for the *status quo ante.* One ostensible revolt was against my autocracy, demand being made—to quote from one of the documents before me—that

"The President-Founder should be asked to select out of the General Committee an Executive Committee consisting of five persons, including Mr. T. Subba Row and four European gentlemen residing at Headquarters, and to transfer upon them all the supervisory, financial, and executive affairs of the Society,

to distribute and direct the work of the Society, to appoint all officers—the President-Founder excepted—and to ratify all documents concerning the Society."

If this was not modesty, what would be? I was to step aside, after conveying all my powers to a group of five persons, self-picked for me out of the whole Council—four of them Europeans, recently arrived from Europe and America, having but the briefest experience in the executive management of the movement, next to no personal intimacy with the majority of our members, no association whatever with the Ceylon Buddhists, whose educational programme was then getting into full swing, no recognised hold on the affections and confidence of the Hindus and Parsis, nor, with one exception, any private means to contribute towards the up-keep of the Headquarters and of the movement generally. This last difficulty, however, they would get over by forcing H. P. B. and myself to convey our *Theosophist* and its book business to the Society, without compensation, and without reserving out of the property we had ourselves created, without a rupee's help from the Society, even the pittances needed for our modest support: they thought it highly detrimental to the Society's interests that the magazine should be private property! A fine scheme, worthy of the Red Republicans of Ninety-three. Damodar, Bawaji, and Alnanda, our three devoted Hindu fellow-officers, denied the validity of each of the complaints, and protested vehemently against the plan in all its

details; while Mr. Leadbeater coincided with them in a very temperate yet firm paper, which is before me. But on 5th February, 1885, when poor H. P. B. was thought to be dying, they got her to scrawl the following:

"Believing that this new arrangement is necessary for the welfare of the Society, I approve of it, so far as I am concerned.

"H. P. BLAVATSKY."

Mr. Leadbeater says, in his paper: "Mme. Blavatsky withdraws her endorsement of the writing, as having been given without a clear perception of the construction it bears upon its face." The imminence of death being past, her mind worked again, and she repudiated her endorsement and—as remarked in the last chapter—begged me tear the paper, which I refused. This is but one of a number of proofs of ingratitude that I have had since the Society was founded. If I mention it at all it is not by way of protest, but as a striking corroboration of the old truth, that he who sets himself to work for his fellow-men should expect no thanks, but much unkindness. H. P. B. and I had given Rs. 9,000 out of the *Theosophist* fund towards the Society's necessities within the preceding twelve months, and, of the nett profits of the magazine to that date, *viz.*, Rs. 15,600, had paid the Society Rs. 14,994-4-6, as I find noted in my Diary. If the charge of "autocracy" lay against me, it was because, until then, I had had to shoulder all the responsibility alone and push on all the movement. Our present helpers had not yet

stepped into the ranks, and it was not until two years later that Mr. Judge began to work in America.

The Europeans being leagued against us, I naturally turned for counsel and sympathy to my most trusted Hindu advisers, and long consultations ensued between them and myself, at the residence of Dewan Bahadur R. Raghoonath Row. The result was the adoption of a policy which shortly after I carried out. Mr. Hodgson, of the S. P. R., was still at Madras, and hearing that at an Anglo-Indian dinner-table he had expressed his belief that H. P. B. was a Russian spy, I called on him with Mr. Cooper-Oakley to discuss the matter. Both of us gave our views so clearly that we came away with the impression that Mr. Hodgson thought the charge as puerile and unfounded as we did. Yet he stuck to it, and put the cruel slander into his report to his employers of the S. P. R. Since then I have had no respect for him, for it was a stab in the back to a helpless old woman, who had never done him the least harm. He made me suffer intensely in mind for a couple of days by declaring that Hurrychund Chintamon, of Bombay, had shown him a letter of H. P. B.'s to him, from New York, in which she said I was so under her hypnotic spell that she could make me believe what she liked by just looking me in the face. I saw that such an assertion, however transparently childish and absurd, would be taken up by our opponents to do us harm. While I did not mind what they might do, if even ten times worse than this, it went to my heart that H. P. B., whose loyal friend I had been through everything, should

have done this act of treachery to me ; and merely to gratify her vanity, as it would seem. But that is the inconsistent creature she was, *in her physical self*, and it was these traits which made it then so very hard for anybody to live and work with her for any length of time. I have always said that the trouble of getting on with her, *as Helena Petrovna*, was infinitely more difficult than to overcome all the outside obstacles, impediments, and opposition that stood in the way of the Society's progress. In my whole experience in the movement, nothing ever affected me so much as this. It made me desperate, and for twenty-four hours almost ready to go down to the beach and drown myself in the sea. But when I put the question to myself what I was working for, whether for the praise of men or the gratitude of H. P. B., or that of any other living person, all this despondency drifted away and my mind has never gone back to it. The sense of the paramount obligation of doing my duty, of serving the Masters in the carrying on of their lofty plans—unthanked, unappreciated, misunderstood, calumniated—it mattered not what—came in to me like the flash of a great light, and there was peace.

March 25th, I wrote to Mr. Sinnett and suggested the formation of a Central Committee or T. S. Board of Control, with Headquarters at London, to have charge of our interests in Europe ; thus anticipating the idea of a Section, which was adopted later. He, however, did not like it, for, in fact, this would commit him to the policy of a popular propaganda, which H. P. B. and I, under *superior* encouragement,

had always followed out, but which to him was always repugnant; as it had been to Mr. Massey and Dr. Wyld before him.

March 28th was a tempestuous day at Adyar, it seems, for I have written: "A day of disagreeable experiences: H. P. B. wild and violent; news of a further step in the plot of the Missionaries against us; threatened suit against General Morgan by the Coulombs. A bazaar rumor, and improbable." But it was true, as the sequel proved. All this excitement told almost fatally upon my dear Chum's health. It was awful to see her, with her face empurpled by the blood that rushed to her head, her eyes almost standing out from their orbits and dead-looking, as she tramped up and down the floor, denouncing everybody and saying wild things. Her physicians said this could not last, she must have rest and quiet or she would drop down dead some day without giving us a moment's warning. So she listened to them, and, on 29th March resigned her office and gave Babula orders to pack her trunks. Dr. Hartmann and I went the next day to town and took passage tickets for her, Miss Flynn, of Bombay, the Doctor, who consented at my request to go and look after H. P. B., and "Bawaji," then a devoted follower of hers. The party sailed for Naples on the Tuesday in the Messageries Co.'s steamer "Tibre". She was so helpless that Dr. Mary Scharlieb's husband, one of the Presidency Magistrates, procured the use of a hospital chair, and she, sitting in it, was lifted from the boat on board by a hoisting tackle. That night, by her request, I moved over into her room and slept in it for

the first time. She particularly asked me not to give it to any other occupant.

The following passages are copied from the official report that appeared in the *Theosophist* (Supplement) for May, 1885 :

"At about this time Madame Blavatsky was having severe attacks of palpitation of the heart, and all at Headquarters were kept in a state of alarm, as the physicians had expressed the opinion that under any sudden excitement death might be instantaneous.

"Following is the certificate of her medical attendant :

"'I hereby certify that Madame Blavatsky is quite unfit for the constant excitement and worry to which she is exposed in Madras. The condition of her heart renders perfect quiet and a suitable climate essential. I therefore recommend that she should at once proceed to Europe, and remain in a temperate climate—in some quiet spot.

(Sd.) 'MARY SCHARLIEB,

'*M. B. and S. L. London.*'"

"The local members of the General Council, meeting at Headquarters as an Executive Committee on the 12th instant, adopted unanimously the following :

*Resolution*

"'Resolved that Madame Blavatsky's resignation be accepted, and that the President be requested in the name of the Council to inform her of the great regret with which they have learnt that she is

compelled, on account of her extreme ill-health, to relinquish her duties as Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society. The Council further record their high sense of the valuable services she has rendered to the cause of science and philosophy.

(Sd.) 'R. RAGHOONATH ROW,

'*Chairman.*'"

"To mark our respect for Madame Blavatsky's exceptional abilities, the vacancy caused by her retirement will not be filled, and the office of Corresponding Secretary is hereby abolished. Official correspondence upon philosophical and scientific subjects will, however, be conducted as heretofore by other members of the Executive Staff, and inquiries may be addressed to the Recording Secretary at Adyar."

Her resignation, as acted on by the Executive Committee, read as follows :

"ADYAR, *March* 21*st*, 1885.

"To the GENERAL COUNCIL

of the THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

"GENTLEMEN,—The resignation of office, which I handed in on September 27th, 1884, and which I withdrew at the urgent request and solicitation of Society friends, I must now unconditionally renew. My present illness is pronounced by my medical attendants mortal ; I am not promised even one certain year of life. Under these circumstances it would be an irony to profess to perform the duty of

Corresponding Secretary ; and I must insist upon your allowing me to retire. I wish to devote my remaining few days to other thoughts, and to be free to seek changes of climate, should such be thought likely to do me good.

"I leave with you, one and all, and to every one of my friends and sympathisers, my loving farewell. Should this be my last word, I would implore you all, as you have regard for the welfare of mankind and your own karma, to be true to the Society and not to permit it to be overthrown by the enemy.

"Fraternally and ever yours—in life or death,

(Sd.) "H. P. BLAVATSKY."

I believe that by taking this wise step she saved her life, for it was to the last degree unlikely that she could have borne the strain much longer ; and her colleagues are, in a way, indebted to Dr. Mary Scharlieb for the subsequent appearance of *The Secret Doctrine*, *The Key to Theosophy*, *The Voice of the Silence*, and all the other valuable writing she was spared to do after getting out of the psychic maelstrom that had been created about her at Adyar. Apart from the motive of her ill-health and incapacity for work, she was influenced by the wish to relieve the Society from the responsibility which her continuance in office would lay upon it. Later, at one of the Annual Conventions, she was unanimously and enthusiastically invited to return if her physician should consent, and although she could never do that, she resumed her old official status.

"The Headquarters," I wrote on April 1st, in my Diary, "is desolate, yet peaceful as it has not been before. We can now face the situation calmly. General Morgan writes that he has received a letter from Mme. Coulomb's counsel, demanding an apology for calling her a 'forger' and a 'purloiner of letters'." On this, a Council meeting was called, and we telegraphed the loyal old veteran to ask a week's delay to give him time to prepare his answer. At an adjourned meeting, the next day, "the whole Morgan case was discussed, and the unanimous opinion was that the General had better defend the case, as he would most probably win it and expose the worthless characters of the Coulombs." He did so, but—as noted in a previous chapter –the Missionaries withdrew the suit, as they could get no benefit from it now that H. P. B. was out of their reach !

At a Council meeting on the Sunday following (5th April), I brought forward as a tentative measure a plan for the creation of a real Executive Committee, which should share with me the management of the Society, and it was adopted. My circular was worded as follows :

"ADYAR, *April 7th*, 1885.

"With a view to improving the administration of the Theosophical Society and relieving the President of a portion of the responsibility which now devolves upon him, I have determined to form, as an experimental measure and subject to ratification by the next Convention, an Executive Committee, of which I invite you to become a member.

"My wish is that this Committee should assume, in connection with myself, the entire management of the Society's affairs during the recess—each member and myself to have an equal vote, the President to have a casting vote in case of a tie; all questions to be decided by the majority present; the Secretary to the Society to act as Secretary to the Committee; the entire proceedings to be kept strictly confidential, save with the consent of the majority present; and the Committee to meet at least once a week for business.

"The design being merely to form a convenient working Committee of Councillors most accessible from the Headquarters, I propose that a circular be sent to each and every one of the members of the General Council, notifying him of the appointment of this Executive Committee, and inviting him to attend the sessions when in Madras, and at all times to communicate through any one of his colleagues among your number any matter he may think it advisable to have acted upon. Thus practically the entire General Council would have a share in the management of the Society throughout the year.

"It is to be understood, of course, that the present measure is adopted tentatively, and that the right is reserved of rescinding this special Rule in case difficulties should arise (as in the late Board of Control) of so serious a nature as to prove its inexpediency."

In pursuance of the invitation appended to the above circular, the Executive Committee met, and in obedience to a Resolution unanimously adopted, the

following gentlemen signed an acceptance of seats "under the conditions mentioned in the President-Founder's circular letter"; R. Raghoonath Row; P. Sreenivasa Row; S. Subramanier; C. Ramiah; P. Parthasarathy Chetty; T. Subba Row; A. J. Cooper-Oakley; and C. W. Leadbeater.

The Committee as thus organised went on harmoniously for some months, but was ultimately abandoned, for the practical reason that nobody save myself had all the details in his head, nor the personal acquaintance with individual colleagues and their local environments, which were needed for acting with judgment in specific cases. The meetings resolved, finally, into mere sittings to agree to all my recommendations, one member after another absented himself, and it was the general wish that I should go on as previously, doing what seemed best without further obstruction. The marplots, Messrs. Lane-Fox and Hartmann, had left the country, and no one else was disposed to make trouble. Yet autocracy was my abhorrence, and I asked nothing better than that somebody should come forward and take a share of the great responsibility for the administration of our difficult business. I looked on the Society as a free and open republic of altruism, in which there should be no sect, or caste, or privileged class, nor any strife or emulation save as to who should best work for the good of the world. I put my views into a leader in the *Theosophist* for June, 1885, entitled, "Infallibility." It was apropos of a recent move of Keshub Chunder Sen towards the assumption of quasi-divine honors from his following, I said:

"A Brahmo organ charges us with the purpose of building up 'a new order of priesthood'. Perhaps the theory is based upon the fact that certain phenomena have been shown in connection with our movement, and that the authors of two or three Theosophical books, possibly to give them more weight, have affirmed their personal relationship with Mahatmas. But whatever the phenomena, their exhibition has always had for its object to prove the existence in all mankind of certain psychic potentialities, which, under favoring conditions, develop. Was it ever pretended that only certain chosen 'vessels of election' could have these powers, or that their exercise proved their possessors to be infallible teachers? Is it not, on the contrary, absolutely true that, from the first page of *Isis Unveiled* to the last line printed about Theosophy, the uniform burden of Theosophical teaching has been that man, as man, possesses to-day exactly the same psychic and other capabilities as his remotest ancestor possessed; that in successive cycles these have been alternatively developed and latent; and that religious knowledge results from psychic development? Where is the room for a priesthood among us in the exoteric sense of the word? or the necessity, in a Society like ours, for leaders? The writer, for his part, is convinced that, whatever mental sufferings, and whatever injury to personal reputations may result from recent events, the price is not too high to pay if the last chance be destroyed of ever building up a sect and 'priesthood' in the Theosophical Society. Rather than see that calamity befall the movement, he would prefer that

the respect now felt by any friend for anyone concerned in its inception or direction should be lost; for then the field would be cleared of obstructive personalities for the consideration of first principles. In neither his official nor private capacity has he evinced any sympathy with the yearning after inspired teachers or infallible teachings. Quite the reverse: for he has never let slip an opportunity to affirm the dignity of private judgment; the necessity of individual research and interior development for the comprehension of truth; the absolute independence of Theosophy of all special teachers or groups of teachers—all sects, dogmas, confessions of faith, forms, ceremonies, and national or geographical limitations. If this is not broad enough; if, in any other language besides English, there be any stronger words to express an absolute repugnance to the idea of any thinking person blindly giving up his sovereign right of inquiry to any other person, high or low, adept or non-adept, and of giving any value to a teaching beyond its own intrinsic weight by appealing to an authoritative authorship—then those are the words the writer would wish to employ. There never was an Adept or Mahatma in the world who could have developed himself up to that degree if he had recognised any other principle. Gautama Buddha is held to have been one of the greatest in this august fraternity, and in his *Kalāma Sutta* he enforced at great length this rule, that one should accept nothing, whether written, spoken, or taught by sage, revelator, priest, or book, unless it reconciled itself with one's reason and common sense.

"This is the ground upon which we stand; and it is our earnest hope that, when the founders of the Theosophical Society are dead and gone, it may be remembered as their 'profession of faith'. With stout old John Hales, the preacher of the sixteenth century, we maintain that 'to mistrust and relinquish our own faculties, and commend ourselves to others, this is nothing but poverty of spirit and indiscretion'."

For my part, as one of the co-founders of the Society, I had persistently adhered to that policy of personal freedom and personal responsibility of the member from the beginning, and have stood for it and fought for it down to the present day. When I can no longer have such freedom within it, I shall leave the Society, and grieve over it as a lost cause. If I needed a Pope I should go to Rome, where a so-called Vicegerent of God is enthroned, and a brazen toe of a statue is always waiting to be kissed. Docile obedience to a TEACHER, who has mastered the secrets of life and death, of man and nature, is natural and proper; but servile obedience to a bald creed, or to a person no better nor spiritually wiser than onself, is the worst of serfdoms—undignified, unmanly, a spiritual suicide. This, I repeat, is my own feeling about the matter, and nobody save myself is responsible for it. It does not bind another member of the Society, and, free-thinker as I am, I am ever ready to stand by my neighbor and defend his right of private judgment, howsoever orthodox he may be to whatsoever form of religious faith. If he is unable to

reciprocate, I should ask or compel him to resign his membership, for he has no natural place within our ranks, and "an empty house is better than bad company".

Two consoling things happened at this time, two rifts of clear sky amid the gloom : the Berhampur (Bengal) T. S. sent us a letter of sweet sympathy, and the Ceylon Buddhists reported that the Buddhist National Holiday which I had asked Lord Derby to grant them had, with their Governor, Sir Arthur Gordon's consent, been gazetted.

Under the circumstances of the situation we had the choice of two policies, the passive and the active : we might keep quiet, carry on our current business without attracting public attention, or we might adopt the bolder course of challenging public opinion, by giving lectures in the principal centres of Indian influence and thought. I declared for the latter, and, my colleagues of the Executive Committee concurring, a lecture at Pachiappah's Hall, Madras, was arranged for 27th April—the 117th day of the year ; hence, to our notions, one of good omen. The result exceeded our highest expectations ; the Hall was packed in spite of the fact that, to prevent a rush, the Managing Committee made a small charge for admission. The sum of Rs. 150 was taken at the doors, and given away in charity. Five professors of the Christian College attended, but their presence did not dampen the ardor of their students, who almost cheered themselves hoarse.

I see that the lecture was very fairly reported the next day in the local papers—an encouraging circumstance

in itself. T. Subba Row brought back, on the same day, our copy of Mohini's and Mrs. Holloway's *Man, a Fragment of Forgotten History*, and made a very severe criticism on it. "He condemned it utterly" —I write—"saying that its mistakes are calculated to throw discredit upon the Mahatmas, while its dogmatic tone is insufferable." When the book was announced in London, with the intimation that it embodied authoritative teaching from the Masters of Wisdom, I at once wrote to the *Pall Mall Gazette* to deny the claim *in toto*, and warned the public that the authors of the book were alone responsible for its contents. Moreover, I had pasted inside the cover of every copy sold by the *Theosophist* Manager the same notification.

The European Mail of that week brought dispiriting accounts of the feeling among our people : the result, no doubt, of H.P.B.'s not having been allowed to prosecute her slanderers in court. Still, it could not be helped ; to have done otherwise than we did would have been most unwise.

If the Missionaries did not let Mme. Coulomb loose against General Morgan, it certainly was not for lack of provocation, for the *Madras Mail* of April 29 contained his reply to her plaint, in which he renewed his former insults and defied her to do her worst ; the Editor, at the same time, giving notice that the discussion should not be carried further in his columns.

As a mental recreation, on the principle of offsetting one disagreeable thing by another even more lugubrious, I read a good deal just then about the

Witchcraft and Witch Trials of the seventeenth century. It strikes a Theosophist, in particular, most forcibly what revolting proofs those tragedies afford of human bigotry, stupid prejudice, and densest ignorance of the laws of life, mind and soul. It is enough to make one weep to recall the pictures of ignorant and innocent hysteriacs and mediums persecuted, imprisoned, even judicially murdered, because phenomena, which they could not help, occurred in their presence, spreading panic and horror among the eye-witnesses, who were equally ignorant and powerless as the neurotic patients themselves. D'Assier has made good use of some of the thousands of recorded facts, and Prof. Charcot and his colleagues have drawn upon the judicial archives for a basis of argument; but we have only to turn over the pages of Des Mousseaux and the host of writers upon these psychical and mediumistic mysteries, to see that there exists an inexhaustible fund of proof of the occasional interplay of occult forces and the mutual interference of the planes of the living and the dead.

## CHAPTER XVII

## CONCERNING SIBYLS

AFTER a residence of only five months, Mrs. Cooper-Oakley found her health suffering so much in India that about this time she had to leave us for home under medical orders. Our loss has been the very great gain of the London Headquarters, where, under a more bracing climate, she has done a prodigious amount of work.

Our London news of that week was more calming, as it appeared that, besides Mr. F. W. H. Myers of the S. P. R., nobody had resigned his membership. Whether or not a popular disbelief in the infallibility of professional handwriting experts influenced public opinion, or whether it was just the instinctive feeling that an accused person ought to have the benefit of the doubt, the fact above stated was gratifying to the colleagues of H. P. B. There was in the *Theosophist* (June, 1898) a reference to the late Mr. Montague Williams, Q.C.'s opinion of the value of this expert testimony. Since then a copy of Mr. Williams' *Leaves from a Life* (Macmillan & Co., 1890) has been sent me by a friend in New Zealand, and I am able to show, by the testimony of that eminent leading counsel, how unnecessary was our grief and distress

on hearing that Mr. Netherclift had declared the K. H. letters forgeries by H. P. B. Mr. Williams tells (*op. cit.*, p. 263) the story of a case of alleged libel by publication on a postal card, brought against Sir Francis Wyatt Truscott by one John Kearn. Messrs. Poland and Grain conducted the prosecution, while Sir John Holker, Mr. Williams, and Horace Avory represented the accused. The prosecutor and a lady swore to the identity of the handwriting, and the evidence of Charles Chabot and Frederick George Netherclift, professional experts, was then taken. Both swore positively to the writing on the postcard as being that of the defendant, Chabot pointing out in detail to the jury the turns of letters and flourishes, the dots, cross lines, and up and down strokes which bore him out in his decision ; and Netherclift, pet of the S. P. R. and slayer of the Blavatsky Medusa, said " he had made handwriting a study during more than thirty years . . . and that, after minutely comparing the letters (of the defendant) with the postcard, he had independently come to the conclusion that the writer in both cases was the same. He produced *a most elaborately written report, calling attention to the various similarities existing between the handwriting on the different documents*, and, on being cross-examined, he adhered absolutely to the position he had taken up." Alas ! for the poor man. The defence put upon the stand one Mr. Thomas Flight Smith, an acquaintance of both the parties, the accused and accuser, who swore that he had himself written the postcard as a friendly warning to Sir Francis, yet without malice to Mr. Kearn !

His father, Mr. T. J. Smith, bore him out in the assertion, and produced three other postcards written by his son. Mr. Alderman Swan Nottage, who stated that he was a friend of the accused and the witness, Mr. T. F. Smith, and had received many letters from both, and was acquainted with their respective handwriting, swore "that the postcard was undoubtedly written, not by Sir Francis, but by Mr. Smith". Mr. Williams adds: "The jury stated that they did not wish to hear any further evidence, and proceeded at once to pronounce a verdict of 'Not Guilty'. So much for the evidence of experts in handwriting!"

So much, indeed; and notwithstanding the Arab proverb about the malodorousness of proffered advice, I will venture to recommend that copies of Mr. Montague Williams' book and of the Report of the Parnell case be placed in the library of the S. P. R., for the benefit of those who care to know what the professional opinions of handwriting experts are sometimes worth. Poor H. P. B., how those S(leuthounds) of P(sychical) R(esearch) made thee suffer under the knouts of these experts!

On the Good Friday of that year I had had an interview with a Telugu Brahmin astrologer, the possessor of a palm-leaf copy of that wonderful old book of prophecies, the *Bhima Grantham*, who had greatly astonished me by his readings in that volume. In the *Theosophist* for May, 1885 (vol. vi, number 8), will be found my account of it, under the title "Indian Sibylline Books". As prophecies acquire no value until their fulfilment, but after that become most important as proofs of the predictive faculty in man, my

habit is to put on record all I hear of this sort, so that they may be cited at the proper time. That is why I published the revelations of the Telugu Brahmin at the time, and as thirteen years have now passed since then, it will be interesting to turn back to that number of the *Theosophist* and see what he foretold and how he did it. Several friends of ours told us that they had had read out of one of these ancient *ollas* accurate details of their own lives, and prophecies about their affairs which had been literally fulfilled. They had also been allowed to verify the astrologer's readings by consulting the book themselves. These friends told me, moreover, that in the course of their consultations it had transpired that their connection with our Society had been mentioned, and that the book contained much about the Society itself. On this account they had arranged the interview between the astrologer and myself, but only with much difficulty and after overcoming his objections to have a sitting with an European. Even then he would not do it until he had *consulted the book itself*, and learned from it the day, hour, and minute for the interview, the number of witnesses permissible, and the positions (relative to the cardinal points) to be assumed by the Brahmin and myself. At the appointed time we took our seats on the floor, on mats, in the Indian fashion. The book, on being unwrapped, proved to be an ordinary palm-leaf volume, the characters etched on the leaves with a stylus. I judged it to be very old. The edges were much discolored and worn, and the characters black with age. The book was laid before me, the edges of the leaves upward, and I was

told to take in my two hands the unwound binding-cord which passes through holes punched in every leaf, insert it between any two leaves I chose, and open it at that place. I did so, and the astrologer then read the contents of that and following pages. Notes were taken by one of the witnesses. The book said: "The inquirer is not a Hindu, but of foreign birth. He was born with the Moon in the constellation Pleiades, having the sign Leo in the ascendant." Here follow some particulars of the personal sacrifices which I was said to have made for the public welfare. It then continued: "With a colleague, he organised a society for the propagation of Esoteric Philosophy (*Brahmagnyanum*). This colleague is a woman, of great power (*sakti*), high family, and, like himself, a foreigner. Though born so well, she too gave up everything, and for thirty years has been working in this same direction. Yet her karma is such as to compel her to endure great trouble and anxiety; and she is hated by her own kind (the white race), for whom she has worked so hard." It then spoke of two white persons who had been most friendly, but had turned about, published bad stories about her, and tried to make the public doubt the genuineness of our movement. "Many phenomena have been shown in connection with the Society," it went on to say, "and letters received by the Founders from their Teachers have been injudiciously made public: *this has been the cause of all the present trouble.*" The prophecy then followed that our Society would survive me by many years, and, to my surprise, for the two friends present were not aware of it any more

than the astrologer, the book told about a private meeting of myself and others (that at Dewan Bahadur Raghoonath Row's private house which I have mentioned in the last chapter) held the day before, with the subject of our discussion, and prophesied the issue correctly. "The Society," said the book, "is now passing through a dark cycle, which began seven months and fourteen days ago, and will last nine months and sixteen days more ; making for the whole period seventeen months exactly."

Counting backward from the date of the interview, we come to the time, in 1884, of the attack of the Missionaries upon H. P. B., which goes to the book's credit ; and, tracing forward in the light of events, the prophecy as to the passing away of the Society's dark cycle and the beginning of a brighter one we find corroborated. Meanwhile, what had happened was my Indian tour of 1885, which proved a very great success, adding seventeen new Branches to our roll, and which certainly was not to be anticipated by either the astrologer or my two Hindu friends who brought him to me. That "dark cycle" of 1885 was a more serious crisis than any we have traversed since, even that of the Judge secession, for the Society was not then as impregnable in its organisation, the numerical strength of its membership, or its geographical distribution, as it was when the great blow was struck at its life by its quondam Vice-President across the Atlantic.

The question, so often put me as to my belief in astrology, will naturally recur in this connection. I must answer it as I always have, that I have not yet

had evidence enough to warrant my saying I either believe or disbelieve. Many facts in the experience of others, some in my own, go towards proving the truth of this alleged science, yet not enough for a cautious man to base thereon a positive belief. I am waiting, most ready to be convinced, yet determined not to say I am unless I have a good case to go with to the jury of sensible men. It seems as if we can never say what there is in astrology until we have learned all there is in thought-transference. Who is to say that when I sat with that Telugu astrologer he may not have clairvoyantly read my history and traced out his sequal in my own mind or my aura? And although I was permitted to examine his time-worn book of palm-leaves, and his readings were verified by the two Telugu friends who took notes of his readings, that leaves open two questions, *viz.* (1) Did he throw a glamor (hypnotic) over our eyes to make us see what was not on the pages? (2) Was he a cheat who had by hook or by crook found out about the T. S. and its founders, prepared fresh pages of ollas, made them look old by discoloring them, and inserted them among the rest? There is not much weight in either of these hypotheses, still one must think of all alternatives and suspend judgment until all the needed proofs are in. The astrologer, or let us say his book, ventured one prophecy which ought to be recalled from time to time as a test of the science. He said that at the time of my death "the Society would have 156 principal Branches, not counting minor ones, and in them will be enrolled 5,000 members. Many Branches will rise and expire,

many members come and go before then". I, myself, was to live from this hour (*viz.*, 3rd April, 1885, afternoon) "28 years, 5 months, 6 days, 14 hours," which would bring us to early morning of September 9, A.D. 1913. Here we have accuracy, beyond dispute, and it only remains for somebody who survives me to enter this prognostic in his common-place book and write to the then Editor of *Theosophist* about a thing which, probably, everybody else will have forgotten! I am quite ready to believe that the prophecy will be correct to within a year or two. As to the strength of the Society at that time, it seems as if there is a mistake, for already we have about 400 living charters and more members. However, we shall see.

The interested reader will find much about the books of the Cumæan and other Roman Sibyls, and those of Egypt, in the article above mentioned (May, 1885, *Theosophist*). It is a historical fact that the Sibylline Books were so accurate in all their fateful prophecies about the Roman state, that for over two centuries they were kept under the strict custody of *duumvirs*, until Sulla increased the number to fifteen. They were consulted only at times of great national crisis. St. Augustine (*De Civitate Dei*, lib. xviii, c. 23) defends their veracious character, and the Early Fathers generally held them in reverence, as it is alleged they prophesied the advent, life, and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

Whatever the actual value of the astrologer's revelations to me on that Good Friday, it is the fact that they cheered us up at a time of gloom, and no

doubt helped to give me the courage to go forth on my public tours of that year. Mr. T. Subba Row went with Judge P. Sreenivasrow to consult another astrologer in Madras, who also possessed a *nadi-grantham*, but with most unsatisfactory results, as he tells the public in an article on "Nadigranthams and Their Interpreters," which he contributed to the *Theosophist* for July, 1885. He was an extremely enlightened and advanced esotericist, and his views are entitled to the most serious consideration. The astrologer visited failed in every instance to give a correct answer, and what he read or pretended to read from his book proved to be rubbish. The one case therefore offsets the other, and leaves us as far as ever from having a satisfactory answer to the question whether the Nadigranthams deserve to be held in the high repute they enjoy throughout India. But then, again, we have the verified prognostics of my astrologer, and still further, the open question of telepathy and clairvoyance. The late Mr. Judge took a hand in the discussion of the question, giving his views in an article ("The Nadigranthams") in the *Theosophist* for October, 1885. He contends that my case and that of Mr. Subba Row are not identical, as I seem to have got hold of a genuine *nadi*, and the other gentleman of a false one and a tricky astrologer. "It is," he writes, "by no means proved that no nadi is trustworthy, and that at no time could they be relied on . . . can, then, books or leaves be made or procured which may be used in the way pretended? I say that they can, and that there are two or more modes of doing it." He first postulates the

astrologer's having the faculty of prevision or clairvoyance with which "he could have given all the details related quite easily with the aid of a few figures, letters, or verses". His second is that "it is possible to cast up certain astrological figures to be used on certain days and hours, and for certain classes of questions, from which a large number of replies and predictions can be given that would startle the average hearer, and be true not only to the past but also to the future. . . . A large number of leaves could be prepared which would enable one to make replies to any kind of question at once"—*i.e.*, at that same sitting. This again I give for what it may be worth, having no great belief in Mr. Judge's having possessed any very notable predictive power of an occult kind. The one fact that there is throughout the world at this present moment an intense and growing interest in astrology and all the "occult" sciences is sufficient excuse for my having diverged so widely from the episode of the astrologer's visit to Headquarters, at the time with which our historical narrative is now concerned.

As I had no mind to accept blindly the revelations of the *Bhima Grantham*—the palm-leaf book in question—and as I had not had time to handle and examine it during the séance with the Telugu Brahmin, I went to Mylapore with Ānanda to hunt him up. I was allowed to examine it as closely as I chose. Any doubt I may have had about the Pandit's having befooled me with bogus leaves intercalated among the others was set at rest, for every leaf was unquestionably ancient and equally time-worn

with the rest. My notes say: "I saw the book, handled and examined it. It contains 300 answers to questions written with an iron stylus on palm ollas, is perhaps 500 years old, and written in Telugu. There seems no doubt as to its genuineness." And yet the wonder but deepens that out of those mere 300 answers, the Pandit should have found a number relating to the history and destiny of our Society. Had these verses been waiting five centuries to be read to the right questioner when he should appear in the year 1885? It seems absurd on the face of it, yet the incidents of the interview have been truthfully reported, and my account will be corroborated, I am sure, by Mr. G. Soobbiah Chetty, now the incumbent of an influential office in the Madras Sea-Customs Bureau. How, then, explain the riddle? First, fraudulent conspiracy between the Pandit and the brothers Chetty who brought him to me. But they were ignorant of facts read, or seemingly read, from the *Bhima Grantham*; for example, the private meeting at Dewan Bahadur R. Raghoonath Row's house, the nature of our discussion, and the policy determined upon; then as to the outcome of the events at that crisis, with the fixing of the exact times of their fruition. Secondly (if the Pandit had the faculty of psychic vision), the reading by him of the pictures stored up in the "Astral Light". Thirdly, his power to compel subservient elementals to cast a glamor over the eyes of the two Telugu witnesses, to compel them to be blind to the actual writing on the leaves turned over, and to read there the totally different sentences about the Society and

its Founders which he read out to us. Fourthly (and lastly, for I can form no other hypothesis), instead of his compelling enslaved elementals to cast the glamor over our eyes, it is conceivable that he might have been an ordinary medium, like the famed Govind Chetty, of Kumbakonum, and under the control of elementals or other entities who made him, their passive agent, see what they wished him to see, and not what was on the page before his eyes. In either case it is a very interesting problem.

The Council decided, April 18th, to finish the rebuilding of the former "Shrine Room" upstairs, which, in disgust at its defilement by the Coulomb conspirators, I had had demolished on my return from Europe, and to use it as a library, collecting together our several small stores of books. Our modest plan was very soon altered by the rapid accumulation of Sanskrit MSS. and other literature which about this time began. The Adyar Library building was soon projected and built, as we shall see later on.

Meanwhile our dear H. P. B. and party were on their way to Europe. I heard from them from each port of call, and, May 20th, their arrival at Naples and landing. They found cheap lodgings at Torre del Greco, near Vesuvius, and settled down to bear their exile as best they might.

To be able to answer one of Mme. Coulomb's shocking slanders about H. P. B. having been the mother of illicit offspring at Cairo, I sent for a respectable Tamil woman who had helped nurse H. P. B. throughout her dangerous illnesses of

February, and, of course, had had to discover her exact physical state. As might have been expected by all who knew H. P. B.'s character intimately, the *ayah* affirmed and declared her willingness to go into court and testify that her late mistress had never been a mother. She even went so far as to say that whatever marriage she had contracted must have been a merely nominal one. Adult readers will understand my meaning.

At about this time news was received from Paris that our sole surviving French Honorary Fellow Alphonse Cahagnet, was dead. He and the late Baron Du Potêt were our only two, and both were distinguished authorities in psychical science. The first book of Cahagnet's that I read was his *Celestial Telegraph*, which appeared in its English translation at New York in about the year 1851. It was almost the first of my reading about the clairvoyant faculty and modern ecstatical visions of the world of spirits. Unfortunately I never had the chance of conversing with its honest and enthusiastic author, but he sent me his photograph and that of his wife, the ecstatic "Adêle," which I keep hanging in my private rooms. Not a visitor has ever guessed that the heavy-bodied peasant woman of the picture was even a clairvoyant at all, let alone that soaring visionary whose soul-flights through space took her to supernal planes, where she was swallowed up in a great blinding light, that drove back the less ethereal clairvoyants whom Cahagnet sometimes set to watching her in her upward progress. Elsewhere, when writing on the subject of clairvoyance, I have quoted from

Cahagnet's book his description of the agony felt by him on finding himself powerless to draw Adêle's soul back into her body when she felt so merged in the spirit sphere as to declare she should never re-enter the "corpse" that seemed so repugnant to her. He tells us that the body began to even change color like a real corpse, and show the preliminary signs of decomposition; while he, in the greatest distress and fear, vainly brought his strongest will to bear upon her soul to come back, and not leave him to be perhaps tried for murdering the adored wife of his bosom. Poor man! his plight is one that many have, and anyone may, experience. The last resource that he employed was prayer to God, which succeeded. Of course it would in the case of a man of his temperament, for by praying he raised his consciousness and yearning to the celestial levels on which Adêle was functioning, and so got into touch with her as he could not by the mere use of his brain-power. If one sets out to chase a bird, one must get bird's wings and fly after it; to walk on the ground will be useless.

In pursuance of the policy of propaganda adopted by the Council, I left Madras, May 9, for Vellore, in company with Messrs. R. Raghoonath Row, P. Sreenivas Row, C. Ramiah, and L. V. V. Naidu. Addresses were delivered by the Dewan Bahadur in Tamil, and myself in English. The Councillors returned to Madras, but Doraswamy kept on with me. Our next station was Arcot, where we reorganised the local Branch, then in that sort of compulsory pralaya because of the transfer to other stations of active members

in Government service, which is so often happening throughout India. We went to Arnee next, where a new Branch was organised ; thence to Chittoor, where there was prepared for our delectation much music, many fragrant garlands, and a procession of the 90 boys in the Sanskrit school that our Branch had formed. At 8 p.m. on the 17th we started for Madras and got home the following morning. The results of this short tour were : 1 Branch revived, 1 new one formed, 10 new members admitted, and the T.S. movement put on a healthy footing throughout that district.

Another short tour began on the 21st when I started for Madura, where a lecture was given and two candidates admitted to membership. "But for the Coulomb blight," says my Diary, "the number would have been from 20 to 30." Yet the visit stopped the retrograde tendency, and the two men gained being of influential standing, I felt that we had done well. At Trichinopoly my audiences were large, especially that in an inner court of the ancient Sreerangam Temple, where the people massed in thousands. As on the occasion of my visit in 1882, the scene was most picturesque and striking, the dark-skinned multitude and the massive stone walls, huge gateway and carved monolithic columns being lit up by hundreds of torches, and the Brahmin priests with their snowy cloths thrown up into dazzling whiteness in the glare. With this picture vivid in my mind I left at 1.30 that same night for Tanjore. My first public discourse there was given at the Reading Room ; my second, in the vast open enclosure of the Temple, standing on

the plinth of the colossal Bull, a monster measuring about twelve feet from the ground to its shoulder in the sitting posture. One feels dwarfed in such an environment, and as I stood with the Bull beside me and the lofty pyramid, or *Gopuram*, in front, towering up towards the sky, its numberless life-sized figures of Indian gods, goddesses, and mythological heroes brought out in high lights and deep shadows by the moonlight, the thought of the strangeness of it all rushed in upon me and gave a peculiar tone to my impromptu discourse. The sense of my American modernity, in contrast with the hoary antiquity of the temple and the race which worship in it, was overpoweringly real. A visit was paid, as usual, to the Tanjore Royal Library, once the richest literary collection in India, and even now extremely important ; but it was a not too cheerful experience, for the library is but little used by scholars, since scholarship is so poorly recompensed in these utilitarian days. These repositories of the high thoughts of ancient sages are like so many granaries where the seed-corn of future harvests is kept against the time of sowing.

A little tired and used up by the heat and travel, I laid my straw mat and cotton rugs on the stone platform of the station that night and slept a deep sleep, despite hurrying trains, until 3 a.m., when I left for Kumbakonam, a two-hours' journey. I was kindly welcomed at the station, and lectured that evening at the Porter Town Hall, a fine and large room, to a very large, attentive, and appreciative audience. Kumbakonam, known as "the Cambridge

of Southern India," is a centre of culture and, of course, of religious scepticism—the two going too much together. Naturally I attacked materialistic agnosticism, vindicated our Society's policy and record of usefulness, and defended H. P. B. as a true and brave friend of India, whose unselfish exertions on its behalf put to shame the majority of modern educated Hindus, who acted as if it were a shame, instead of an honor, to have been born in the land of the Rishis. Whether I did any permanent good is impossible to say, but most assuredly the sleepers were aroused to enthusiasm for the passing moment, and who knows what are the consequences of even a moment's awakening to the sense of duties neglected and opportunities slipping away? The next day's audience, in the same hall, were extremely demonstrative as I went on to treat Idols and Idol Worship from the side of psychological science. There were many college men present who had no clear conception of the actual process by which a mere block of stone, metal, or wood, carved into a certain conventional shape, is changed into a sort of psychic dynamo, soaked with human aura and efficacious for the production of psychological and physiological effects upon sensitive worshippers. The process is called in Sanskrit *Prana pratishtha*—the focalising of auric power (*prana*)—and is intensely interesting to the amateur of mesmerism. Without going into details, it will suffice to say that the image goes through a process which extends over forty days and includes the withdrawing from the image of all innate impurities, and the subsequent imbuing or saturating

of it with a purified human magnetism—*i.e.*, aura. Then to fix this supply, as it were, it is customary for the officiating adept, or Chief Brahmin, to prepare, or have engraved on a sheet of copper, a geometrical symbol, called *chakram*, into which a magic power is imparted by the concentration of the trained Will.[1] This copper-plate is placed under the image when fixed in its place, and there left so long as the temple stands. Now, the wiser and purer the adept-consecrator, the more real, effective, and permanent the infusion of *prana* into the image ; and the more carefully the *chakram* is prepared and placed, the more lasting its efficacy as a storage-battery of divine power. One sees, from all this, that the good Bishop Heber was more or less silly in saying :

> The Heathen in his *blindness*
> Bows down to *wood and stone*.

In point of fact, neither is the Heathen blind, nor does he bow down to wood and stone : quite the contrary, and the average Missionary is the real blind one, since he knows nothing at all about the Powers, symbols, customs, or ceremonies which he reviles.

On to Cuddalore, my last station of this tour, where I lectured on Idols in the Temple, where I was surrounded by them ; and on 1st June I got back to Adyar, with a thankful heart for having escaped sunstroke or heat-apoplexy, and, despite the high temperature, having done so much to restore the old kindly feeling between the South Indian people and ourselves.

[1] *Vide* the standard Western books on Magic for an explanation of the occult connection between geometrical signs and the Powers of the Elementary kingdoms.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## FINAL DEPARTURE OF DAMODAR

An official tour in Northern India having been planned as part of the year's programme, I sailed for Calcutta in the French steamer "Tibre" on 3rd June. It was a relief most blessed to get to sea and enjoy its pure, cool breezes and its ozone after my recent tour in the South, with its concomitant heat and dust, its crowds, mental anxiety, and physical strain : never did I so gladly go out from land upon the deep blue Bay of Bengal, badly as it had treated me at times. I was in the thick of the fight for the salvation of the Society, my courage and faith rising in proportion to the obstacles ; and every one will understand what must have been the physical and mental effect of this temporary escape from the strain of public work. Life seemed pouring into my body from the physical mother of all terrestrial life, the germ-hatching sea. I could well have cried out with Uhland :

> Take, O boatman, thrice thy fee ;
> Take,—I give it willingly ;
> For, invisible to thee,
> Spirits twain have cross'd with me.

The weather fine and the sea smooth, I was well rested and refreshed by the time we reached Calcutta,

on the 6th, at 5 p.m. About twenty friends met me on landing and gave me cordial welcome. A crowded meeting of the Branch was held on the next evening, and a stream of visitors kept me busy throughout each day. Instead of losing members I began to admit fresh candidates almost at once ; but my first public lecturing work was fixed for Darjeeling, so I took train for that mountain-cradled station on the second day. The journey occupies but twenty-five hours, and one has scarcely time to prepare his body for the change from 100° to 60° Fahrenheit before one is there. It is a most delightful little trip, provided one has good weather and is not too much delayed by landslips in the mountains.

The whole Darjeeling Branch met me at the station, and with them was that excellent, philanthropical young millionaire, the late Tej Narain, of Bhagalpore, founder of the prosperous Anglo-Sanskrit College that bears his name and perpetuates his memory. He and I were old acquaintances, and the founding of this College, for the accomplishment of which act credit is largely due to Babu Ladli Mohun Ghose, L.M.S., one of our Bhagalpore members, is directly traceable to our Society's influential appeals to the Hindu heart and conscience. Tej Narain brought Sarat Chandra Dās (the now famous Founder and Honorary Secretary of the Buddhist Text Society, a C.I.E., and Rai Bahadur for his services to Government and achievements in Philology) to see me, and many others called daily. Sarat Babu is a most interesting man to talk with, if one cares about Tibet and Northern Buddhism, for he knows more about them

than any man in India—or outside it, for that matter. He was a teacher in Government service, in charge of a Bhutia and Sikkimese school at Darjeeling, and had learned a good deal of the Tibetan language, when the idea came to him to try the feat, which has baffled so many European explorers, of reaching Lhassa, the mysterious Tibetan capital. In the character of a Pandit and Indian doctor he went and actually succeeded; not only that, but he brought back with him many Tibetan versions of early Buddhistic books and a very complete knowledge of the Tibetans, their Lamas, religious ceremonies, and holy days, not to speak of the geography of Tibet between the Indian frontier and Lhassa, his notes on which had to be collected with the greatest care and preserved with the greatest cunning. For example, as he could not use a surveyor's chain, he counted distances by telling the beads of his rosary. His two reports to the Indian Government are highly interesting and instructive, the narrative comparing favorably with the best works of the kind by the world's most famed explorers; and, what is strange for an Oriental, they are free from bombastic exaggeration and extravagant hyperbole—*cf.* the "Mahavansa". In conversation, as confidence was established between us, he told me most interesting things about the white and black magic of the "yellow" and "red" Lamas—things which amply support the evidence of the Abbés Huc and Gabet, and of Mme. Blavatsky as well. But, being a Government servant, he seems to think that if he should tell the public what he told me several times and once Mrs. Besant in my company, his

reputation as a scientific observer would be jeopardised and his interests have to suffer : in short, he takes the selfish view of it, and has for many years now been hiding truth because he can't afford to give it out. He actually lived thirteen months at Teshu Lumpo, in the household of the Tashi Lama, the second in rank in the Lamaic hierarchy ; made the journey thence to Lhassa under favorable auspices ; saw and talked with the Dalai Lama, or Supreme Pontiff, and brought back manuscripts, printed books, and other souvenirs of his memorable journey. He was good enough to give me one of the soft silken scarfs that the Tashi Lama, at a reception, laid across his hands, after the national custom, when they were held out with joined palms in reverential salutation. I have it at Adyar among our curiosities. Woven into the tissue is a picture of the Lord Buddha, seated, with his two disciples, Sariputra and Moggallana, at his right and left.

Among my frequent visitors was Babu Parbati Charan Roy, one of the best educated of Calcutta University graduates, and then holding a position of influence under Government. Like too many of his class, his feeble spiritual belief had been submerged by Western educational influences, and he was a thorough disbeliever in the future state, though always ready to discuss those questions. I am glad to say that his contact with H. P. B. and our literature eventually worked a complete change in his ideas ; he became a member of our Society, and some years later published a book giving the history of his repudiation of his ancestral religion, his return to

it, and the peace of mind and joy which this brought him.

The then young Prince of Nuddea came to see me and spent many hours in my company, seeming happy to be under the influence of one who loved his country and people. His tutor, a brilliant graduate, was another free-thinker and sceptic, so that, for all the religious good he got by it, the Prince might as well have been brought up by one of those disbelieving European tutors who have checked the pious inclinations of their young royal pupils. I could name cases if I chose or it would do the least good, but as it is, the friends of India can only grieve over the too common spectacle of heirs to ancient thrones being led out of the path trodden by their ancestors, and turned into irreligious billiard-players, pleasure-seekers, and toadies to the whites, instead of being encouraged to patronise religious men, learned scholars, and the classical literature of India which, in the good old days, shed lustre on the Courts where its custodians were supported and honored. It is not the fault of the poor boys, but of the europeanising system under whose masterful influence they come—a system perhaps good enough for Western princes, who are not expected to shine as religious exemplars, but bad for Indian chiefs, who are called to rule over millions of unspoilt Asiatic subjects. I once visited a Rajkumar College in Northern India—*i.e.*, a school for the sons of ruling chiefs and nobles—and was taken through the rooms by the Principal, the most liberal-minded European teacher I have met. Being requested to address the lads, I tried to impress on

their minds the responsibilities imposed upon them by the fact of their princely birth, and begged them to try to emulate the examples of Ikshavaku, Harischandra, and Dharmaputra, rather than that of some of our contemporary princes, whose hoarded wealth is wasted on flitting pleasures, and whose minds are never given to holy thoughts. I have heard since from one of those boys that my offhand remarks made such an impression on them that they formed a society among themselves, to encourage each other to be good Indian rulers and leave honored names behind them. Admitting, what is more than likely, that, for want of following up, the influence was but transitory, yet I think it was a gain to have even planted the seeds of higher ideals in those receptive boyish minds, and that the forming of their society is an indication that the adoption of such a system would be a great blessing to India. We need give no weight to the objection that it would be an evil thing to encourage these future petty sovereigns to fall into gross superstition and idolatry, for that comes from the class of persons who do not know, or, if they know, dare not reveal, that when Hinduism is read with the key of Theosophy it represents no superstition, nor does its idol-worship tend to degrade the lofty conceptions of the Supreme Being which are presented in the *Gîtâ* and the Upanishads. What is desirable is that, not only the Indian princes, but all intelligent Indians, should realise the dignity of the religion imparted to the Aryan race in the present Manvantara, and the real meaning of their religious stories, folk-lore fables, and carven symbols, which

teach, by carefully-chosen object-lessons, the limitless power, wisdom, and justice of the One Divine Reality.

Damodar K. Mavalankar is one of the best-known characters in the early Indian history of the Theosophical Society, and has been frequently mentioned in the course of these memoirs. He left Adyar, while I was away in Burma, for the last time on 23rd February, 1885, for Calcutta, in the s.s. "Clan Graham," with the intention of going to Tibet *via* Darjeeling. This was thirty-six days before H. P. B.'s own final departure for Europe. Four persons on this side of the Himālayas had voices in this matter, of whom three were H. P. B., T. Subba Row, and Maji, of Benares: the chief agent, of course, was H. P. B., Mr. Subba Row having merely some questions to be answered, and Maji some clairvoyant information to give. The name of the fourth party I shall not mention, but merely say that he is equally well known on both sides of the mountains, and makes frequent religious journeys between India and Tibet. Damodar hoped to be allowed to go with him on his return to Lhassa, though his constitution, naturally delicate, had run down from overwork, consumptive tendencies had shown themselves, and he had had some hæmorrhage. The most disquieting rumors were circulated, soon after he left Darjeeling, about our dear boy's having perished in the attempt to cross the mountains. In the first week of July it was reported to me from Chumboi, Sikkim, that his corpse, frozen stark and stiff, had been found in the snows, and his clothing at a little distance. Despite

the transparent improbability of his having thrown off his clothing in that climate merely to die, the tale was believed by many, chiefly by those who denied the existence of the White Lodge, and who wished to cast some opprobrium on us for allowing a young fanatic to sacrifice his life in so evidently vain a quest. Well, we bore it, as we did, and ever since have, similar malicious stories, with as much equanimity as we could summon. But at Darjeeling, through the courtesy of Babu Saratchandra Dās, who interpreted for me, I had a long talk with the chief of the coolies who went with Damodar from Darjeeling through Sikkim, and who brought back his superfluous luggage and his pocket Diary. From this latter important document I am now tracing Damodar from Madras to the time when he sent back the coolies and passed under other protection than ours. The value of his past work and the possibly important part he may be destined to play in the future of this movement of ours, makes me think that it is as well that I should include the chief parts of the Diary in this history.

### Damodar's Diary

"*February* 23*rd*, 1885.—In the evening embarked on the 'Clan Grant' to go to Calcutta. *February* 24*th*. —Steamer sailed before 6 in the morning. Did not suffer from sea-sickness. 25*th*.—Made friends with the Doctor of the ship, who seems to be a very nice man, but to know or care little for philosophy, though he has the capacity if he would only develop it. 27*th*.—

Reached Calcutta at about 4 p.m.; was met at the jetty by Norendro Babu and others, whom I told about my illness and of the necessity for a change." [Of course, concealing the ultimate purpose of the journey.—O.]

Here follow entries about his talks with friends, his visit to the local Branch, and his opinion about its activity, which was not too favorable. Then come his notes on his leaving by rail for Berhampore, where we then had about the best Branch in India, under the leadership of Babu Nobin K. Bannerji, President; Babu Dinanath Ganguli, Vice-President; and Babu Satkauri Mukerji, Secretary—three as good colleagues as any man could ask for in any great public movement. After spending three days with them he moved on to Jamalpur, where we had (and still have) another Branch. I note that once in Calcutta and once at Berhampore he was recognised by persons who had seen him in their dreams, an experience that I have often had myself in different lands. The Jamalpur brothers, he says, put to him much more interesting and intelligent questions than those propounded in Calcutta, showing that they had thought deeply about the great problems of life.

"*March 8th.*—Reached Benares and went to Maji's *ashram*. Had long talks with her both morning and afternoon. She spoke about Subba Row, and told me things which he had only lately spoken to me in private. Also spoke about Bawaji and said things

known only to Mme. B. and myself. Said various other startling things.

"*March 9th.*—Conversations with Maji continued. She spoke about the portraits of the Masters at the Headquarters and told me many surprising things. Four Benares Theosophists called in the evening. Maji's talk was very interesting and instructive. In the afternoon she told me about Subba Row's Guru and about himself.

"*March 10th.*—Commenced to take internally some medicine she prepared for me. Had private talks with her during the day. Mme. B., she says, will not die for a year or more yet. When she does, she will probably reincarnate in Subba Row's family, and reappear in public life after ten years.[1]

"*March 11th.*—Talks continued. In the afternoon attended a meeting of the Benares Branch. The Munsiff of Benares is President. The members are all new, but earnest and intellectual. Later, Maji showed me a portrait of her father which was precipitated after his death.

"*March 12th.*—A morning talk with her, and one at noon, entirely private, in her *gupha*,[2] when she discussed the plans in view and the persons concerned. She tells me startling facts and something about the future. She says that for about a fortnight I am not

[1] As neither of these prophecies has been fulfilled, we must discount all of Maji's revelations to Damodar. At one visit I myself paid her, she predicted that H. P. B. would die within two years of that time and at sea. Neither of these proved true.

[2] A cave such as Yogis excavate for themselves to live in. The one at Maji's was used by her father, a Yogi.

to go to . . . [the personage with whom he wished to go to Tibet], but then it will be determined whether I shall proceed further.

"*March* 13*th*.—Left Benares at 11 a.m. Travelled all day and night. Reached Calcutta the next morning."

He spent the next fortnight in Calcutta, and his Diary records the visits exchanged and conversations held on different occasions.

"*March* 30*th*.—Received a telegram, through . . . from . . . that I might now come to Darjeeling and matters would be arranged."

He left town on the 31st and got to Darjeeling on 1st April, where he was cordially welcomed by our members and became the guest of Babu Chhatra Dhar Ghose, F.T.S., one of our excellent colleagues. Three days later a representative of the personage who was leaving for Lhassa came to see him, and told him to keep himself in readiness, although the day of departure was not yet fixed. Damodar saw the agent several times, and all details were agreed upon. At last, on the 8th, the party arrived, and Damodar received his orders to start, which he did, as the following entry shows.

"*April* 13*th*.—Left Darjeeling at 10.15 a.m., and reached Runjeet (about 11 miles) in the evening. Halted there.

"*April* 14*th*.—Left Runjeet about 7 a.m. Took rice (*i.e.*, broke his fast) at Tasding, about one and a

half miles from Tasding Bridge. Reached Vecha, about four miles beyond Kalingpong, in the evening at about 6 o'clock. Halted in a cow-shed for the night.

"*April* 15*th.*—Left Vecha after morning coffee. Took *bhāt* (rice) at Podaon,[1] where I met Babu Opendranath Mukhopadhyaya. Reached Renanga in the evening, where I sent . . .'s coolie back with the pony.

"*April* 16*th.*—Took *bhāt* instead of coffee the next morning, and went on without stopping to Sanangthay, about a mile beyond Dichbring. Reached there before 5 p.m. Stopped in a Bhutia house.

"*April* 17*th.*—Left Sanangthay in the morning after taking *bhāt*, and got to Bhashithang in the evening at about 5. It is about two miles from Ranevon, which is on top of a hill at whose foot is this village.

"*April* 18*th.*—Left Bhashithang in the morning, after *bhāt*. Reached, about 4 p.m., the river Dichoo, at the place called Doomrah, about three miles from Longboo. After crossing the river there is an ascent for about five miles before reaching the capital of the Sikkim Raja. Stopped for the night by the river.

"*April* 18*th.*—Left the river in the early morning, after *bhāt*, and reached Sikkim at noon. Stopped with the . . . (the personage with whom his journey was to be made). Saw him for an hour in the afternoon. Nothing in particular said. Am to have a talk to-morrow. Had another interview with him

[1] Some of the names of places are almost illegible, Damodar having written his Diary in soft pencil, which in the course of time has got rubbed.

at night. He will tell me positively to-morrow about effecting my purpose. He leaves Sikkim the day after to-morrow.

"*April 20th.*—Another talk with him.

"*April 21st.*—Saw him again to-day. I wanted to go on to Longboo, but he wants me to remain till to-morrow, when he will be a little more at leisure.

"*April 22nd.*—Left Sikkim in the morning at about 10 o'clock. Reached Kabi (about half a mile from Longboo) at 3 p.m. Halted there for the day. The . . . said he had not yet fully known me, but that I am destined for some important work within the next month or two; that I must probably be a big Tibetan lama reincarnated in Tibet. The Karma is great.

"*April 23rd.*—Took *bhāt* in the morning, and proceeded on from Kabi alone, sending back my things with the coolies to Darjeeling."

Here the Diary ends, and this is the last written trace of this devoted, high-minded, enthusiastic young Brahmin, whose record since joining H. P. B. and myself at Bombay is one of unbroken energy and unfaltering zeal in the cause of humanity. A nobler heart never beat in a human breast, and his departure was one of the hardest blows we ever received. As above remarked, he had almost broken down his constitution by incessant official work, and when leaving Adyar had begun to spit blood and show signs of a rapid decline. Yet, with undaunted courage, he undertook the hard journey across the Himālayas, indifferent to the biting cold, the drifted

snow, the lack of shelter and food, intent upon reaching the Guru whom he had first seen in his youth when lying on a sick-bed, of whom he had lost sight for many years, but whom he had recovered soon after joining the Theosophical Society, as his spiritual faculties developed and he was able to seek him in the *sukshma sarira*. What made him so devotedly attached and unswervingly loyal to H.P.B. was the discovery that this Guru was one of the Adepts behind our movement, the intimate associate of "Upasika," as he always subsequently called H. P. B. From the chief coolie of his escort I got particulars about him of great interest. After the pony was sent back to Darjeeling, Damodar tried to proceed on foot up the steep acclivities of the mountain track, but his strength soon gave out, and after that the coolies carried him by turns on their backs. To conceal his connection with the Tibetan functionary who had promised his protection and aid, Damodar was ordered to go on ahead two-days' marches and then wait for the other to come up. That the junction should be unwitnessed, the coolies were ordered back to Darjeeling. Damodar would not keep any more clothes than the ascetic costume he was wearing, nor any of the rice, meal, pulse, or other dry provisions with which his friends had supplied him. The most he would do was to let the chief coolie bake him a dozen *chapaties*, or unleavened pancakes. The last that was seen of him by the coolies was when, with face turned towards the Tibetan frontier, he trudged painfully on and disappeared behind a turning of the road. On their way back the coolies passed the personage

who was following after our dear lad; and the *jemadar* heard subsequently that the junction had been effected, and the caravan proceeded on towards the pass through the mountains.

It is quite possible that Damodar's rejected clothing may have been found in the snows, for it was agreed that he should receive Tibetan dress, and be supplied with food, shelter, transportation, and all necessaries. The finding of his frozen corpse is quite another matter. That is certainly a lie. A Māyā of his body *may* have been left there to make it appear as if the pilgrim had succumbed; but that he reached his destination safely, and has ever since been under the protection of his Guru, I have reason to believe. So far, however, as intercourse with him in the ordinary way is concerned, he might as well be dead, for he is inaccessible by post, telegraph, or messenger. Though he has written thrice to two persons in India, he has passed out of our reach as effectually as though his body had been dropped into the sea in a shotted hammock, and I have refused the most urgent requests to disclose his place of abode or the possible time of his return. This latter for the good reason that I do not know when, if ever, he will come back to us. That he will, I believe; and I should not be surprised if he came when H. P. B., reincarnated and, like himself, changed beyond all recognition, shall resume the world-work she had to drop on "White Lotus Day" in 1891. It would be too unreasonable to imagine that the Lords of Karma would keep any one of the best workers of the Theosophical movement idling about on the other planes of existence, when

the cry of the suffering world for light and guidance is rising to their celestial abodes. Their chief desire and paramount duty is to help our human race to climb the path to the higher levels, where delusions, born of spiritual ignorance, wither away in the blaze of Wisdom like flowers bitten by a frost.

## CHAPTER XIX

## IN NORTHERN INDIA AGAIN

I WAS loath to exchange the cool, bracing climate of Darjeeling for the hot, vaporous temperature of the Plains, but I had still many hundred miles of journeying before me before my tour should be finished and I could take rest at green Adyar, with its refreshing ocean breezes and its river running just beneath my chamber window. So, after more talks with the Tibetan traveller and my other friends, more conversaziones, and a public lecture at the Town Hall, I descended the mountain to Siliguri, the junction-place of the Himālayan Railway and the Northern Bengal, and sweltered in a temperature of 100° to a most uncomfortable extent. It suggested to me the change from the outer air on a crisp morning to that of a greenhouse. However, work had to go on all the same, and I organised the Siliguri T. S. that same evening, sat up late talking and answering the metaphysical conundrums they are so fond of putting in this country, and slept on the stone platform of the station as the coolest—say, rather, the least hot—place to be found.

Saidpur, the next place on the programme, was reached at noon on the 19th (June, 1885), and at

6 p.m. I lectured to a very large gathering on "Theosophy and the Aryan Revival". There was another lecture on the next day and the admission of several new members, as the happy proof that the malign influence of our persecutors had not spread that far. I went next to Rajshahye *via* Nattore, and I mention the detail merely because the distance from Nattore to my destination had to be made in a palanquin—the most ignoble of all modes of conveyance, I think, to a healthy man. Fancy yourself lying at ease on your back, smoking, reading, or dozing, in a coffin-like box carried by poles on the shoulders of six or eight undersized coolies, in a pouring rain, over a sticky clay road, twenty-eight miles in nine and a half hours; the wretched pole-bearers gasping a droning refrain the whole way, except when they would groan to excite your pity and get bakshish—and say whether I am not right. True, they are trained to it from boyhood, and at the end of such a heavy journey as this would come in to your place on the trot, but still I felt thoroughly ashamed of myself, innocent though I was of any part in the business. "Talk, talk, talk"—says my Diary—"with all the clever men in Rajshahye, including a German Professor of Physics in the local College"; and there were the usual public lecture and admissions into membership. The return transit to Nattore was even worse than the other, for, leaving at 2 p.m., we did not get there until after 2 a.m.! By that day noon we were back in Calcutta, and I went from the Sealdah station straight on to Bhowanipore to see Maji, who had come from Benares on a visit to Nobin K.

Bannerji at his family house. I had a three-hours' talk with her through Nobin, and she told me that Damodar was then at a place four-days' journey from Darjeeling. This we now see, on referring to his Diary, was not the fact ; so it goes to make another point against the accuracy of Maji's revelations—for which I am sorry. I saw her daily during the fortnight that I spent in Calcutta, and was always much interested by her discourse. She was always surrounded by a small crowd of inquirers, and her answers displayed erudition and insight. Her attractive manner and sympathetic voice added to her popularity. Finally, there was that glamor of supposed mystical powers which attaches in India to every respectable yogī and yoginī, and which is a survival of the traditions of the olden times. These powers she must have had to some extent, for we have seen that on our first meeting, in 1879, before anything was known in India about H. P. B.'s connection with two certain Adepts, she told me things about them that she could not have learnt from third parties, and in Damodar's Diary we read how she astonished him with her revelations about Subba Row and others. It was my early enthusiasm about her that mainly caused Nobin, Dinanath, Bihari, and Shama Charan Babus to come to her as disciples, and to do so much to make her known and popular in Bengal and Behar ; so that, naturally enough, I was most anxious for her reputation as a mystic to be fully sustained. If it has not, it is not my fault.

The local Committee had me lecturing in all the quarters of Calcutta during my fortnight's stay.

Among other topics given me was a defence of Hinduism against the missionary charge of gross superstition and immorality. It will scarcely be credited by those who have even a superficial knowledge of the ethical teachings of the Aryan sages, that the chief of the Scottish Mission in Calcutta had the effrontery to put in print the assertion that Hinduism tends to make its men liars and its women unchaste ; yet he did this, and it fell to me to refute this outrageous calumny. To hear me, the elite of Hindu society were invited, on 3rd July, to the house of the venerable scholar and nobleman, Raja Radhakanta Deb Bahadur, author of the great lexicon, *Sabdakalpadruma*. I believe every local Indian scholar of note was present, and that I had no great difficulty in proving my case.

So far from encouraging untruthfulness, dissoluteness of behavior, or any other vice, the Shastras teem with exhortations to noble conduct and the striving after the very highest ideals. Manu (VI, 92) enumerates the following "ten-fold system of virtuous duties" : Contentment ; abstention from injury to others, active benevolence, and returning good for evil ; resistance to sensual appetites ; abstinence from theft or illicit gain ; purity, chastity, and cleanliness ; correction of the passions ; acquisition of knowledge ; acquisition of Divine Wisdom ; veracity, honesty, and fidelity ; freedom from wrath and hatred. A little farther on he says : "Persevere in good actions, subdue thy passions, bestow gifts in a suitable manner, be gentle, bear hardship patiently, associate not with the malignant, and give pain to no sentient being."

Again, he says (II, 239 ; IV, 178) : "Walk in the path of good people, the path in which thy forefathers walked. Take examples of good conduct from all, as nectar is taken from poison, gentleness of speech from a child, prudent conduct from an enemy, and gold from dross." Again : "Though reduced to penury in consequence of thy righteous dealings, give not thy mind over to unrighteousness." Then, we find in the *Taittiriya*, the *Mundaka*, and the *Sandilya Upanishads* this injunction : "Speak the truth (*Satyam*). Truth alone conquers, not falsehood. No religion or morality is higher than truth. Nothing is higher than truth." It was hence that the Benares royal family took their motto, which, with the late Maharajah's permission, I adopted as the legend of the Theosophical Society. "Mercy is the might of the righteous," says the *Vishnu Purana* (I, 21), an axiom that matches the noble definition of Mercy that Shakespeare put into the mouth of Portia. And how poetical and touching is this sentiment from *Hitopadesa* : "A good man thinks only of benefiting all and cherishes no feelings of hostility towards anyone, even at the moment of his being destroyed by him ; just as the sandal tree sheds perfume on the edge of the axe when it is being felled." *Manu* (VI, 47) goes so far as to say : "Being treated cruelly, do not return the cruelty. Give blessing for curses." Is there anything more noble in any other Scripture ? So we might go on multiplying similar quotations from the teachings of the Aryan sages, to prove the cruel injustice of those who concur with the Calcutta missionary that Hindu religion is the nurse of

vicious tendencies. How can such people ever hope to convert intelligent Hindus to their religion? How far the sympathies of the Indian public went with us may be judged from the fact that, whereas my public audiences ran from 1,500 to 2,000, only a score or so of persons, and they Christians, went to listen to an address, given after my departure by one of the ablest preachers of the missionary party, denunciatory of our views!

On 7th July I left Calcutta for Bhagalpore, but was intercepted at Nalhati Junction by our dear brothers of Berhampore, and, so to say, compelled to diverge in their direction. Between Azimgunj and Berhampore is the Palace of the Nawab of Murshedabad, an old friend of mine; and he had arranged for me to break journey, spend part of the day with him, and dine at the Palace. I did so, and he and I had a long talk about religious and scientific matters, and parted with expressions of mutual goodwill. My reception by the friends at Berhampore was, as usual, most cordial, and my four days there were full of pleasant experiences. With one exception, however: for on the 9th we heard by telegraph from Calcutta of the sudden death of Nobin K. Bannerji, President of this Branch, of whom I have spoken above. He was to have met me at Berhampore on the 9th, but died of an attack of cholera. Among our Indian colleagues not one was more prized and beloved than he, and it is a consolation for me to know that he is likely to soon reappear in the ranks of our workers in a better body than he had in the last incarnation.

I reached Bhagalpore, my next station, on the 12th, and became the guest of Tej Narain, whom I have mentioned in my notes on the Darjeeling visit. Here I met Babu Baidyanath Bannerji, my blind patient of Calcutta, whose sight I restored, as the reader will probably remember. Well, I found him again blind. His restored sight lasted only six months and then faded out, and the pall of black night again descended upon him. As before, a boy now led him into my presence, and he looked up into my face with that inexpressibly touching expression that one finds in the eyes of the sightless ones. I felt very sorry, and not altogether hopeful of being able to do any good. However, I drew him into the room, kept him standing, and began the same course of manipulation that I had employed so successfully two years before. I touched my finger-points to his closed eyes, sometimes those of one hand, sometimes of both ; when it was the former it was the right hand that I held to the eyes, and the left was laid on the nape of the neck. Then I made passes before the eyes and the brow, and, finally, breathed gently on the eyeballs through a glass tube. All the while, of course, I was willing with my whole strength that the sight should be restored. Thus keeping on for a half-hour, I was at last rejoiced to hear him ask : " Is that a table behind you ? " It was, and thenceforward and by degrees the blessed light came back into his darkened orbs, until he could at last distinguish every object in the room. Ah, if you could have seen the heavenly smile that spread over his features then ! You would have stood there, as I did, amazed at the discovery

that you had this sort of divine gift of healing, and that it needed but a few passes of your fingers and a few breathings over a blind man's eyes to draw him out of midnight gloom into the sunlight of sight, with the whole panorama of surrounding objects opened before him.

This case of Baidyanath teaches a great scientific fact, *viz.*, that blindness, when due to suspended nerve action, may be removed by mesmeric treatment, provided that the right conditions as to mesmeriser and patient are given ; that the sight, thus restored, may fade out after a time, when, presumably, the nerve-stimulus has subsided for lack of renewal ; that, even after an interval of two years, the sight may be again restored and after even a very brief treatment. The reader will recollect that when Badrinath (or Baidyanath) Babu was first treated by me at Calcutta and elsewhere, after ten treatments he was able to read fine print with one eye and see a bed of flowers at some distance with the other. On this second occasion, two years later, I made it possible for him, after a bare half-hour's treatment, to read the smallest type in a newspaper and, of course, to distinguish every object within the range of ordinary vision. It is true—as I learned subsequently—that his sight failed him a second time, but only after twice the number of months that it had before. This made me believe that if I could have had the patient under constant treatment for, say six months, the optic nerves would have been restored to normal function and the cure completed. The lesson to professional healers is that they should never

despair if there should be a relapse after a first success. Moreover, they should note that, whereas the confidence of the patient may have been shaken by the loss of sight after the first operation, it can be restored in spite of that, with one-tenth the trouble as before. The *sine quâ non* is that there shall be no lesion in the nerves, for that makes a break that can never be mended.

At Jamalpur, when lying in bed one morning, I had my first experience of an earthquake, and it was curious. It seemed to me as if the house were solid but built on a stratum of bog, or jelly, which was all of a quiver, like the generous paunch of St. Nicholas when he was laughing—if we may believe the famous Christmas poem ! While it lasted, my memory recalled sundry stories of historical earthquakes, and I was not sure whether the house would not tumble about my ears ; still I thought I might as well take the chances where I was, as to rush outdoors and perhaps drop down some crack.

Among the topics of discourse given me here by the local Committee was : " Theosophy Not Antagonistic to Hinduism." On thinking it over, I invented a new plan. Among the members of the Bhagalpore T. S. was the late Pandit Nityānand Misra, a most excellent man and capable Sanskrit scholar, who had come to Jamalpur with me. So I arranged with him that he should sit beside me at the lecture, I should go on and make my points one by one, should pause after each, and he should then rise, repeat some sloka of *Gîtâ* without a word of comment, and then sit down, and I would go on to my next stage. Both he

and I spoke extemporaneously—*i.e*, without notes or any defined plan previously agreed upon—and this made all the more interesting and striking his flexibility of mind and thorough familiarity with his national literature. The effect on the audience may be guessed.

At Bankipur I was kept up to a very late hour, the day of arrival, by visitors, and on retiring I sank into one of those deep sleeps which I can always get when there is nothing else to do, and which brace me up for the wearisome round of a travelling tour. At the College, the next day, I had a very crowded audience, including several hundred students, the ones I most love to address. One of the Professors, an English gentleman, was good enough to preside, and his boys were particularly enthusiastic. The Principal, however, moved by an unreasoning prejudice, refused the hall for the second lecture, and the Committee had to make other arrangements. If these narrow-minded men could only realise how they weaken their personal influence with their pupils by these futile attempts to do us harm ; how, in fact, they largely increase their sympathy and their enjoyment of our discourses on the national literature and religion, surely they would not be so tactless as they usually are. Not one of them ever heard a Theosophical lecturer say one word that was opposed to good morals, or that had the slightest tendency to make his or her hearers worse than they are : quite the contrary ; yet they go on nourishing hatred against us, and vainly trying to belittle our strong influence in every way by word and action. Poor creatures.

they might as well try to pull the stars out of the sky ! While they are dreaming their impotent dreams of malice, the influence of Theosophy is travelling the whole earth, like a thrill of electric force that might run around the planet. One has to come to India to realise how a whole community of European people can become steeped in besotted prejudice against us. Their own relatives at home throng Mrs. Besant's lectures, buy our books, take in our magazines, and join our Branch Societies ; but these hold themselves aloof, and use the name of our dear H. P. B. as a word to curse by. More's the pity, for I am perfectly sure that it would only need the aid of some ardent society man, like the late Samuel Ward, or society woman, like some I know of in our European and American Branches. to bring around nine-tenths of the community. But then we public speakers should have to lecture to them and such few of the higher-class Hindus as they might choose to invite, or to confine our talks to their drawing-rooms where no ordinary Hindu is welcomed. In a word, the color line is drawn across the gateway of almost every Anglo-Indian bungalow, and our obliviousness to this fact is one of the strongest causes of our unpopularity. One could see, when Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett and Mr. Hume were introducing us into Anglo-Indian society at Simla, that there were no insuperable obstacles between them and ourselves, and that if we could run in their grooves we might in time become quite friendly. But this we could never do, for that would mean almost cutting ourselves adrift from Hindu society ; and so we must go on as

hitherto, close to the hearts of the Indians and far away from the other community, our blood relations and nearest of kin in the flesh—of this incarnation. It seems a pity, but we can't help it: for one reason, that we can neither afford the money that we should have to spend in society, nor the time that would have to be consumed in visiting and going to "functions of sorts" to keep up acquaintances.

At Benares, Pandit Bhavāni Shankar Ganesh—then doing duty as one of our Branch Visitors—joined me for the rest of the tour throughout the N. W. P. We took boat on the Ganges to pay a visit to Maji's *ashram*, to which she had returned from her Calcutta visit. We were caught in a heavy downpour of rain and well wetted.[1] In the afternoon H. H. the old Maharajah of Benares presided at my lecture at the Town Hall, and the notorious Raja Siva Prasad

[1] By an interesting coincidence, just after the above had been sent to the printer, I read in the *Indian Mirror* of a very recent date the following obituary notice of this remarkable woman:

"We are much concerned to hear of the passing away from this worldly plane of the venerable lady, known to the numerous visitors to the holy banks of the Baruna at Benares, and to the wide circle of her admirers, as *Majee*, the *Mother*. In every respect the deceased lady was a remarkable personality. She was a Sanskrit scholar, and something of an adept in occult studies. She was easily accessible, and all those who had the privilege of close acquaintance with her, literally worshipped her as a divinity. *Majee* was one of the few who thoroughly believed in, and testified to, the mission of the late Madame Blavatsky, and bore testimony to the existence of the Great Teachers who have done so much for the propagation of Theosophical truths in the world."

Maji was a Guzerati Brāhmini by caste, but spoke other Indian languages, including Sanskrit, fluently. She was a thorough Vedantin, and of a very cheerful temperament.

interpreted; which did *not* give satisfaction to the better part of the audience, as he indulged in remarks of his own, adverse to my views. At the close, that ripe scholar and ex-professor at the Anglo-Sanskrit College, Babu Pramada Dasa Mitra, made a very dignified and acceptable speech in moving the vote of thanks. He was my Chairman the next day at a lecture to Indian Youth, in the course of which I gave a summary digest of the Six Schools of Indian Philosophy, and which caused an orthodox Hindu gentleman to call on me next day and say that I had now brought the orthodox community to realise that our Society was not a mere Buddhist propaganda. He said I was to be elected a member of the Sanskrit Club, which held daily sessions to recite and discuss Shastras.

We next moved on to Mirzapur, at the request of the Maharajah of Durbhunga, then stopping there at one of his many palaces. He sent Col. Jung Bahadur, of Nepal, and Babu Juggul Kissore, his own Political Agent, to meet us at the station and see us housed, and later in the day came and took me for a drive and a three-hours' talk. We spent two days with him, and before leaving he expressed his great appreciation of our Theosophical movement, which, he said, he felt sure was destined to do immense good to his country. He than handed me a Government Promissory Note for Rs. 1,000, which sum, he said, I might count on his giving us annually. This was done without the slightest preliminary expectation on my part, and I felt very grateful indeed. How he kept his promise will be shown in due time.

On to Fyzabad next, where there are almost as many wild monkeys swarming over the house and shop roofs as there are people in the place. And pestiferous creatures they are: they will dart into your very room and snatch and run off with any fruit, article of dress or toilet, or any other loose and portable object that may be lying about. One tall chap sneaked at night into my servant Babula's window, carried off his trousers, leaped across the narrow street to the roofs, called his friends together, and went to biting and tearing the garment, out of sheer mischief.

At my lecture here the very large audience was swelled by the presence of some two or three dozen Europeans—an unusual circumstance. H. H. the Rajah of Ayodhya, the ancient kingdom of Srī Rāma, came to call on me, as did also a number of Pandits and a Committee with the usual address and garlands.

On 29th July I rose at 3 a.m., crossed the swollen Ghogra River in an open boat in a heavy rain-storm, took train, and reached Gorakpur at 7 in the evening. Here, as at all the Northern stations, there were long discussions on the Coulomb-Missionary case, the putting of questions, the showing of letters and papers by me, an invitation of full inquiry, and the re-establishment of confidence and good feeling between us. A tour of this kind seems to acquire a sort of spiritual force as it goes on, which follows and surrounds the lecturer, making him increasingly confident and influential, and more and more able to drive back hostile currents that may be flowing into his vortex. I fancy this has not occurred to all the travelling representatives of our

Society; they may have felt the power without having stopped to analyse its cause. To get at that, one must look on the next higher plane of consciousness above this one of our everyday world.

## CHAPTER XX

## PROGRESS OF THEOSOPHY IN INDIA

On my fifty-third birthday (August 2nd, 1885) I reached Bara Banki, the home of that most esteemed, able, and honorable colleague, Babu Parameshri Das where I lectured, admitted new members, and encouraged despondent old ones. Thence on to Lucknow, former capital of the Kings of Oudh, one of the immoral sinks of India where, on the whole, spirituality seems drowned in animalism, though there are many bright exceptions. We were received at the station by committees of the Kashmiri National Club, Bengali Club, Rafiam Association (a Mohammedan body), and our local Branch. They put me up in the Kaiserbagh, or King's Pleasure Garden, a great park full of palaces and kiosks, and surrounded by a quadrangle of houses which were formerly occupied by the princesses and other women of the royal harem. From all accounts this must have been the scene of debauched pleasures hard to parallel. The late King used to have all sorts of sports for his amusement, some of a most immoral character in which his women folk played their parts. His life flowed on in a current of ignoble recreations, until he and his kingdom and all the paraphernalia of licentiousness were swept away by the thunder-burst of the Mutiny

tragedy and the success of the British arms. It needs no great gift of clairvoyance to picture to oneself those ribald scenes as one sits at an open window, looking out on the square, with its artistic buildings, its close-shaven lawns, and meandering walks bathed in the tropical moonlight. Fancy brings them all back, and one cannot refrain from being thankful that this cesspool of animalism has been purged by the inrush of a purer and nobler civilisation.

Almost as soon as I arrived I received a shock in the calmly announced fact that the local Committee of our Branch had engaged that I should give a public lecture the next day on the subject of "Islam". I was in a pretty fix when I found out that there was no escape, as the posters and handbills were already issued, and the whole Mussalman public were to be present. The novelty of a white man being about to lecture in a friendly spirit about their religion was, doubtless, an irresistible attraction. I could have given the Committee a good thrashing, for I had then no more than the slight knowledge of the subject which one gets in the course of his general reading, and I felt very reluctant to speak before so critical an audience as awaited me. Escape being out of the question, however, I borrowed a copy of Sale's *Koran* and another Mohammedan book, and sat up all night to read them. Here I found the immense advantage of Theosophy, for, as I read, the key to the exoteric teachings helped me to grasp all that lay between the lines, and light was shed upon the whole system. I think I never before realised so fully its incomparable value as an interpreter of religious systems.

On entering the huge Baradari, or Royal Pleasure Hall, I found it packed with an audience which included most of the notable Mohammedans of the place, together with some hundreds of educated Hindus. I treated the subject not as a professor of the religion but as an impartial Theosophist, to whom the study of all religions is equally interesting, and whose chief desire is to get at the truth beneath them and boldly announce it without fear or favor. Some good genius must have inspired me, for, as I proceeded, I seemed to be able to put myself in Mohammed's place, to translate his thoughts and depict his ideal, as though I were "a native here, and to the manner born". I could see this inspired camel-rider incarnating where he did, to work out a tremendous Karma as the Founder of one of the mightiest religious movements in history. The audience were certainly aroused to a pitch of enthusiasm, for they gave it tumultuous expression, and the next day a Committee waited on me with an address of thanks, in which every blessing of Allah was invoked for me, and the wish was expressed that their children knew "one-tenth as much about their religion" as I did. Ye gods! how cheaply a reputation is sometimes made. From this experience I venture to say that an intelligent Theosophist is better qualified than any other man to take up the study of any given religion, and will be more likely to get at its inner meaning than the most learned philologist who has sought the key only in the crypt of his rationalistic mind. This recalls a most amusing experience at my first public lecture in London about a dozen years ago. I had

gone on, in what I thought a very unpretentious way, to explain Theosophy as I understood it, and incidentally cited ideas from some of the ancient religious works. The house was packed, galleries and all, and great good feeling prevailed until the close. Then began the usual "heckling" with questions that every lecturer in Great Britain has to face, and which kept me busy for a full three-quarters of an hour. On the whole this cross-questioning is good, for it tends to draw out points which may have been overlooked by the speaker. Just when it seemed as if the ordeal was finished and the audience might be allowed to disperse, a man in the right-hand gallery cried in a loud voice: "Mr. Chairman, I should like to know how it comes that Colonel Olcott has such a general knowledge of all the Eastern religions, when I have studied one of them more than twenty years without getting to the bottom of it." Of course it was a foolish question, an exhibition of mere pique, since I had made no pretence whatever to *knowing* all or even one of the ancient cults, but many years' residence in the East and personal intercourse with learned Asiatics had certainly given me some chance to learn about the spirit and meaning of the various Scriptures. I was just about to say that much, but was saved the trouble, for instantly another voice from the opposite gallery shouted out the word "Brains!" and the whole house burst into a roar of laughter. The chair dismissed the audience, and amid the confusion we could see the indiscreet questioner waving his hands and saying things that were lost in the hubbub. I felt greatly grieved on

learning later that the gentleman was one of the best-known Orientalists of Europe, and that he was so annoyed by his discomfiture as to conceive a violent hatred for myself and the Society—both absolutely innocent of offence!

On the three remaining days of my stay in Lucknow I gave public lectures and private addresses to our Branch and other bodies. By the former I was put through a searching inquiry into the pros and cons of the Coulomb case, but was able to remove all doubts, and left our people in good spirits on our departure from the station.

On 8th August we reached Bareilly in a drenching downpour of rain, our colleagues, Messrs. Cheda Lal, Piari Lal, and Gyanendra Nath Chakravarti receiving us at the station, with the water dripping from them as though they had been out in a surf-boat. A malicious busybody had done his best to foment suspicion against us at this station, and I underwent a very stiff examination, happily with entirely satisfactory issue. Mr. Chakravarti was one of several of our leading Indian members to write H. P. B. that I had saved the Society in India by making this tour, as I had cleared away doubts, enlisted public sympathy, and restored strength to the movement. And why should not I, considering the Powers that were gathered behind us and going forth with us to touch the popular heart? It would have been a black time for me if I had forgotten that for one moment. But I never did; not for an instant did my faith and confidence in the Masters waver, never once did the idea of possible defeat enter my mind.

That was my shield and buckler; that my tower of strength. Those who were for us were an hundred times stronger than those who were against us. On the heels of the Coulomb disaster we chartered seventeen new Branches within that year: let the reader take note of the mystical number. Neither at Bareilly, nor Moradabad, nor Meerut, nor at any other station included in my long programme, did the heavy rains of the wet season prevent my having full, even crowded audiences; though it must be admitted that the watery elementals seemed somehow to be leagued together to help me. It happened so often as to be remarked by many that, by some mysterious chance, the pouring showers would hold up just when it was time to go to my lectures, recommence while the audience was safely housed, and cease again when they had to leave for home. We all know about Queen's weather, so why should there not be some similar provision by benevolent storm-spirits to help their friend and expositor of the Theosophical Society? I leave the conundrum to answer itself, meanwhile just noting a fact that came under the personal observation of many intelligent witnesses.

At each of the stations mentioned in the foregoing paragraph, there were the like questionings and clearings up of doubts, the same lecturings, admissions of candidates, strengthening of Branches. We got to Cawnpore on the 16th, and were most kindly received and entertained by our staunch and tried friend Capt. A. Banon, F.T.S., then with his regiment there. This is the gentleman who—it will be remembered—

so valiantly backed us up against the travelling calumniator, the Rev. Joseph Cook, and caused him to run away as fast as he could to the other side of India, to escape meeting me in public and making good the malicious slanders he had uttered. In all these years this gifted yet eccentric man has remained our loyal supporter, a friend such as an Irish gentleman of good family always proves himself to be. His holding an army commission and being in a military mess unsympathetic to Theosophy, did not weigh a feather's weight with him, as it does with so many : he drove me about, took me to the mess, and was conspicuous at my lecture. In short, he displayed the same quality of moral courage that Sir William Crookes has just shown so nobly as President of the British Association.

My lecture at Cawnpore was delivered in the theatre, a long, narrow room which seems to me full of the most disagreeable influences : if it had been the scene of a massacre it could not have been worse. To make it still more unpleasant, the Committee followed the detestable custom of giving all the front seats to the most unsympathetic class, the Anglo-Indians, Eurasians, and native Christians—the latter, low-caste people, of course, in nine cases out of ten. This made a wall of aura right across the room, through which I had to force my own auric current to reach my friends and sympathisers. One can't help getting sensitive to these influences after a while : a sort of finer sense of their quality, or perhaps we should say polarity, becomes developed, and in such instances as this one has to concentrate all one's will

to break down and burst through this cross-current, so to speak. The phenomenon is confined to India, and is due to the silent, yet irresistible auric antipathy of races: take either alone and one does not feel it, but bring them together, and at once there comes this note of discord. I got over it in this way: I placed myself opposite the aisle, the weakest point in the barrier, and pulling myself together, projected my current towards the Hindu majority until they and I were blended together in magnetic unity. The reality of this law of mutual attraction and repulsion has been too often felt and mentioned by public speakers and actors to be open to question, and anyone who has not discovered it experimentally can hardly be called spiritually sensitive. Cases have been recorded where one single person in an audience has drawn to himself or herself by an irresistible power the attention of the speaker, and actually compelled him, as it were, to address his speech or play his part to him or her. On the next evening I obliged the Committee to reserve the front seats of the left side of the aisle for Hindus and get them filled very early; and when I began speaking, I stood at that side of the stage, thus presenting my strongest, *i.e.*, most positively magnetic, side to the least sympathetic part of the audience. Thus all went well.

Among our friends at Allahabad as much unrest had been created by the Coulomb-Missionary conspiracy against our Society as at any station in India. Certain agents had been very active in sowing distrust and I had my work cut out for me: but I had a good

case, and all came out right in the end. With Mr. Janaki Ghosal I went to pay my respects to Swami Madhavdas, an English-speaking ascetic who is much respected. Curiously enough, he is the author of a compact compilation of *Sayings of the Grecian Sages*, in whose wisdom he found the echo of the teachings of the wise men of his native country. He was good enough to lend me the MS. to read, and allow us to publish it for him, or for his disciples rather, for a man of his sort abstains from meddling in worldly concerns. Among my interrogators about the H. P. B. case was a clergyman named Hackett, who came with an armful of books and pamphlets, with his points all marked. I was very pleased with his courtesy and evident fair-mindedness, and gave him as much time as he required to go to the bottom of the business : he stopped three hours and we parted the best of friends. When I left for Jubbulpore the next day he was at the station to see me off. I wish all Missionaries were like him : but then all Missionaries are not gentlemen.

At Jubbulpore I presided at the anniversary celebration of the Sanskrit school founded by our local Branch, and which is—thanks to the unflagging devotion of Kalicharan Bose—still flourishing. This is but one of at least a score of Sanskrit schools that our people have started, but in too many cases the others have been abandoned because of the lack of that peculiarly necessary quality of stubborn perseverance in their promoters. Not one would have failed if it had been under good European management. I am sorry to say it, yet the Hindu is enthusiastic,

loving, and faithful, but in public affairs he is at his best only when under the lead of colleagues of the more practical race. A contrast to Mr. Hackett was the character of a clique, comprising a Padri of the C. M. S., a pretended Christian doctor, and some other alleged Christians (I can't recognise them as followers of Christ because of their narrow prejudices and intolerance) who attended my second lecture and tried to create disturbance at the close. Seeing their tactics, I refused to let them address my large audience, advising them to hire a hall for themselves and say what they liked. The next day they sent me a challenge to "do a miracle" under conditions of their own prescribing! Poor creatures, let them read their Bible's description of their prototype: "Wiser in his own conceit than seven men who can render a reason." The wheel of Karma must turn many times before they can be fit to even clean a lamp in the hut of a pupil of a Master of Wisdom.

My route turned towards the West through the Central Provinces, Hoshangabad and Nagpur being my objective points. I don't know why, but from Jubbulpore onward I seemed to be passing through a better atmosphere; the dark distrust, wavering courage, and captiousness which had beset me in the N. W. P., and which I had had to dispel, were absent from this part of my circular journey. Friendly hands were offered, kind words spoken, ears opened to hear my message, and many loyal friends and well-wishers made. The Government rest-house at Hoshangabad is most beautifully situate on the banks of the Nerbudda River, and the scene, when I stood

in the bright moonlight on the top platform of the bathing ghāt, addressing a multitude, was most poetic and picturesque. Among my visitors were a number of Europeans in Government employ, and they attended both of my lectures. An even more warm welcome was given me at Nagpur, where the moving spirit was Mr. C. Narainswamy Naidu, the principal pleader of the place, since unfortunately deceased, but from that time onward to the last, one of the most useful, wise, and loyal members of our Society. At his house I formed the Nagpur T. S., with himself as President, and as Chairman of the monster audience which packed the theatre to hear me discourse on "The Aryan Rishis and Hindu Philosophy," he laid over my shoulders, after the old Hindu fashion, a crimson embroidered *chaddar*, or shawl. An interesting incident which happened on that evening will be remembered by the spectators. In the midst of my discourse there suddenly broke into the dead silence one of those raucous, uncanny cries that epileptics utter at the beginning of their seizures. The whole audience rose to their feet and anxiously looked towards the right, where a man stood beating the air, his face convulsed with an expression of agony, and the next moment fell to the floor. He had hardly touched the ground before I sprang from the stage, pushed my way to him, took his forehead and the nape of his neck between my hands, breathed on his face, and concentrated my will upon his disease. In less than a couple of minutes his moanings ceased, the fit passed off, somebody gave him a sup of water, he rose and passed out of the house. Then I climbed

back to the stage and took up the thread of my argument. This simple experiment showed, for the thousandth time, that epilepsy, one of the most formidable of afflictions under orthodox treatment, is quite amenable to the well-directed power of the mesmeric aura. I hope it may be remembered by all who have the power and the wish to help suffering humanity.

We reached Bombay on the morning of September 3 and were affectionately welcomed. Among other visits I paid one to Tookaram Tatya at his Bandora country-house, where we dined together in Hindu fashion. Tookaram was a man of the Sudra caste, and, like all intelligent persons of his rank, felt the pressure of the higher castes galling to him. To get rid of this in a measure, at least in his own mind, he had got me to obtain the permission of the High Priest Sumangala to give him the Pancha Sila and admit him as a Buddhist. At the same time, in view of the certain ostracism of his family by Hindu society if he openly seceded, he kept his status among them, and in later years, when Mrs. Besant's open profession of Hinduism and defence of the Aryan caste system turned the tide backward, I believe he reverted to his hereditary faith with much zeal. At any rate, of late years I heard no more about his Buddhism. After giving one lecture at Framji Cowasji Hall to a large audience, I passed on to Poona with our colleague the late Mr. Ezekiel, a member of the great Jewish family of the Sassoons and an ardent Kabbalist. At his house I met a Rabbi Silbermann, of Jerusalem, and his wife. They were put up in

one-half of a detached small bungalow in Ezekiel's compound; he, an old and feeble man, with a middle-aged, bright wife and a Hebrew maid-servant. He wore the Oriental costume, as also did Mr. Ezekiel Senior, who lived in the other half of the little house. I was wearing the cool cotton Hindu dress which I find so much more comfortable than our tight European costume in the Tropics, and which I should always wear if the Salvationists had not vulgarised it so effectually. The old gentleman and I were sitting alone together one day, he watching me so closely that I thought something must be wrong about my dress, but he soon undeceived me. Beckoning me mysteriously into his bedroom, he took from a press a complete Jewish costume—turban, gabardine, and all such as he himself wore—and asked me to put them on. When I had done so, he led me by the hand along the verandah to the adjoining rooms, intimating that he was going to pass me off as a Jew. Entering into the spirit of the joke, I gravely saluted the Jerusalem family after the Eastern fashion, and was led by my guide across the room to a chair. The aged Rabbi was sitting on a mat to the left of the door, and on my unexpected entrance saluted me with great respect, pronouncing the special form of words used when greeting a Jerusalem rabbi. He then began putting me a lot of questions in Hebrew, and refused to believe that I was a mere Gentile, when young Ezekiel, laughing heartily at his bewilderment, told them who I was. No, he insisted that my nationality was too evident, and would go on with his Hebrew cross-questioning until the

facts had been reiterated to him over and over again. His wife, sitting in a rocking-chair over against the side wall of the room, with her maid on the floor at her feet, looked me over most scrutinisingly, and confirmed her husband in his belief as to my Hebraic origin. "Why," said she to the maid, "who can deny it? See, has he not the *shekinah?*" meaning the shining aura, the *tejas* as the Hindus call it. Both the Ezekiels were immensely amused at the success of the old gentleman's trick, and it was gravely proposed that Mr. Ezekiel Senior and I should be photographed together in the costume, as a souvenir. But my stay at Poona was too brief to allow of its being done. I lectured once in town on "Aryan Morals," with the eminent Mr. Ranade in the chair; and once at Ferguson College to 1,000 Hindu boys, on "Education". The leading native gentlemen were present. To illustrate my idea of what bad education is, I turned to the nearest student and took from him his Geography and glanced at the portion allotted to India. I found that to the whole of Asia—India, Burma, Siam, Ceylon, China, and Japan—were given only seventeen pages of description, while to the United Kingdom something over forty pages! Of course, I said, it is most evident that the compilers of this book thought it quite useless for Indian youth to know anything about their own native land, its history, products, capabilities, etc., but indispensable that they should know about every English county, its resources, population, industries, towns, and villages, so that they might be prepared to make a pedestrian tour over there.

What nonsense to call that an enlightened system of education!

The last public event during my stay was a lecture at Hirabāg, the picturesquely placed Town Hall, on "Karma and Kismet," after which I left the station for Hyderabad, the Nizam's capital.

## CHAPTER XXI

## PHENOMENAL MEMORIES OF PANDITS

THE Nizam's Hyderabad, as it is called, to distinguish it from Hyderabad, Sind, is one of the most distinctively Asiatic cities in India. It has a picturesqueness and artistic interest in strong contrast with other large towns, especially the Presidency capitals. The streets are alive with fighting men armed and equipped like the figures in an illustrated edition of the *Arabian Nights*, elephants and camels are seen in processions, the stamp of Orientalism is upon every shop in every bazaar, and life goes on in the ancient fashion with little coloring by Western influence. At the same time, Hyderabad is one of the worst centres of dishonesty and immorality, as bad as Lucknow : bribery and corruption are said to be rife, and public mal-administration to be the normal condition of things. Yet, despite all this, there has been a centre of Theosophical work there for many years, and a few earnest souls have kept the torch burning amid the spiritual gloom. All honor to them !

I reached this place on 11th September (1885) at 4.30 p.m., and received the usual welcome, with an address and garlands, and had to make the expected

reply. An American colleague was quite right in saying in a recent letter that, with my keen sense of humor, it must often sorely tax my powers of self-restraint to listen to some of the fantastically extravagant panegyrics that are read to me on arrival at Indian stations. It would be simply impossible if it were not for my knowledge of the heartfelt sincerity that is usually covered over by these perfumed garlands of compliment. There is a voice of the soul which makes one pay no heed to mere speech, and which stirs up the responsive emotion in one of my nature.

On the day following my arrival I had the good fortune to witness a display of that superlative mnemonic training of which India affords so many examples. The reader will find in the *Theosophist* for January, 1886, an article by myself on "Some Aspects of Memory," which, besides a general inquiry into the subject, covers also a report on the Hyderabad experiments under notice. Thirteen years having elapsed, it may be as well to recall the marvellous details in the present connection. I shall therefore reprint the certificate which the spectators handed to the Brahmin Pandit : it reads as follows :

"HYDERABAD (DECCAN), *14th September, 1885.*

"The undersigned have much pleasures in certifying to the following intellectual achievement by Vedanta Dasigacharya of Theruvellur, Madras Presidency, of which they were eye-witnesses.

"The Acharya, having arranged ten of us in two lines, simultaneously kept in mind and did the following eleven things :

"I. Played a game of chess, without seeing the board.

"II. Carried on a conversation upon various subjects.

"III. Completed a Sanskrit sloka from the first line given.

"IV. Multiplied five figures by a multiplier of four figures.

"V. Added a sum of three columns each, of eight rows of figures.

"VI. Committed to memory a Sanskrit sloka of sixteen words—the words being given him out of their order, and at the option of the tester.

"VII. Completed a 'magic square,' in which the separate sums in the several squares added up to a total named, whether tried horizontally or vertically.

"VIII. Without seeing the chess-board, directed the movements of a knight so that it should make the circuit of the board within the outline of a horse traced on it, and enter no other squares than those.

"IX. Completed a second magic square with a different number from that in the above-named.

"X. Kept count of the strokes of a bell rung by a gentleman present.

"XI. Committed to memory two sentences in Spanish, given on the same system as No. VI, and correctly repeated the same at the end.

"As a study in mnemonics this was a most instructive experiment. The Acharya has, it seems, acquired the power of creating in his mind, for each of the several things he does, a separate mnemonic

point, or thought-centre, and around this forces the ideas relating to it to cluster and group themselves."

Signed by H. S. Olcott, Bezonji Aderji, G. Raghoonath, M. Raghunayekaloo, A. T. Muthukistna, Darabji Dossabhoy, Hanumant Row, Bhimaj Raojee, and Iyaloo Naidu—all members of our Society.

The plan is for the Pandit to go around the group of testers one by one, as many times as may be necessary to complete the mental tests, doing with each, each time, one part of the whole mental task set him by that person. Thus, with the first, he will think out and order one move in the game of chess : with the second, follow his lead in the conversation which is meant to disturb his mnemonic labors : to the third, dictate one line of the desired Sanskrit poetry : to the fourth, name the first part of the quotient, etc., etc. He would thus have to fix in his mind every fact related to the result expected by each of his testers, and at the close reel off the final results without error. From me he took from dictation the two lines of Spanish in this fashion : the words were privately written by me on a slip of paper, and under each its proper number in the sequence was placed : thus :

| *Ay* | *de* | *mi !* | *un* | *año* | *felice* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| *Parece* | *como* | *uno* | *soplo* | *legero* | |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | |

Here we have eleven words running in a certain sequence, but I was allowed to give the Pandit any one of the eleven out of its order each

time that he stopped in front of me in his circuits. Only two things are required, *viz.*, that the word shall be distinctly pronounced until he can catch the sound, and that as we give each we shall tell him its number in the sentence. It is his business then to keep all in memory until the eleven rounds of the circle are made, when he will ponder a moment and then recite the couplet correctly, giving each word its place in the sequence. He must do the same in the case of each of the other testers. Thus he carries forward his sum in addition, multiplication, subtraction, division, etc., one stage at each round, and when he comes again to the same person must pick up the thread of the suspended mnemonic feat and proceed on another stage. So all around the circle. Figure for yourselves the number of separate mental activities he is obliged to keep going throughout, and if this does not amaze you, you must have been reborn from some anterior wonder-breeding planet. This evident overstraining of the brain brings on at last primarily a lassitude and then an exhaustion of the mentality. I have this at first hands; in fact, the Principal of one of our Sanskrit Schools who had been a proficient Asthāvadhāni, had had to give it up completely to save his "wits from falling into ruin". Whoever wishes to go farther into this important subject will find the best authorities cited in the number of the *Theosophist* above mentioned.

My audiences at the Nizam's capital and at the adjacent British military station of Secunderabad were very large and attentive. The topics given me by

the Committee were "The Unity of Religions," "Mesmerism and Its Relation to Occult Science" (doubtless suggested by the recollection of my healings during my previous visit), "Who am I? Whence came I? and Whither am I going?" There were the usual conversation (or puzzle-putting) meetings, Branch gatherings, and admissions of applicants into membership.

Adoni, the cotton carpet-weaving centre, was my next stopping-place, and here I was asked to lecture on "The Aryans and Their Religion". On to Bellary next, where one of our staunchest colleagues, Mr. A. Sabhapathy Moodaliar, lives. After spending three days with our friends there, I went to Gooty, which for many years has been made a stronghold of Theosophy by our local members, especially P. Kesava Pillay, J. Sreenivas Row, and T. Ramachandra Row, than whom no society has three more active and useful workers. Before leaving Bellary I had the chance of testing the alleged efficacy of my snake-stone which, my earlier readers may recollect, I got from a snake-charmer at Bombay soon after our arrival in India. At that time the mere approach of the stone (which was no stone, but a bit of bone) to an angry cobra would make it sway on its coils, lean over backward, and finally subside to the ground; but it did not work so at Bellary. The cobra on which I tried it was apparently trained to obey the signs of his master's hand, and paid no attention to me or the stone. So I put the failure as a counterbalance to the Bombay success.

Our Gooty friends had bought at Government auction a fine stone building for a nominal price, and had not only installed in it a Sanskrit school which they had established, but made it the Branch Headquarters and the chief place for lectures and other public meetings. Just at the back of the town rises a rocky hill of 1,000 feet in height, crowned with a strong fort which had been captured and recaptured at different times in battle before the British occupation. Within its walled enclosure is the alleged tomb of Gautam Rishi (not the Buddha), which is a place of pilgrimage. The fort is now dismantled, and might be bought of Government for a nominal sum. As there are many good rooms that could be made habitable at trifling cost, I thought it would be an admirable place of retreat for some European friends of mine who had a mind to realise in practice Mr. Sinnett's ideal of a castleful of mystics, as described in his novel, *Karma*. So, after getting all needed information, I proposed it to them, but nothing came of it.

To reach the last station on my tour programme, Anantapur, I had to travel all night in a bullock carriage, which shook me about to such a degree that sleep was almost impossible, and I was not sorry when, a mile from the place of destination, I found ready for me a tent pitched, with bath and breakfast ready. Anantapur was all dressed out with flags, a band of musicians obstreperously greeted me, there was a public address to reply to in presence of a great crowd, and in the evening an overflowing audience listened to me on the subject of "Modern Scepticism and Brahma Vidya". The next evening I organised

the Anantapur T. S., and, later, took the *bandy* again for Gooty, which was reached at 8 a.m., after another sleepless night. Thus closed my long tour of 113 days, of 1885, in the course of which I had visited 31 Branches and given 56 public lectures besides uncounted private discussions and answerings of questions. Beyond doubt the tour did good in restoring the courage of friends, enlightening the outside public as to our views and aims, removing unjustifiable suspicions as to H. P. B. and the Masters, strengthening old centres with new members, and creating fresh ones where previously we had not been represented. In a word, the bolder policy had been vindicated, and it was very easy to see, on giving a retrospective glance over the year, that it would have been a great misfortune if I had listened to timid counsellors and stayed quietly at Adyar, waiting for the clouds to roll by.

Again I must emphasise the fact, which I tried to make clear in the last chapter, that I did not count upon my own powers or abilities only to do this work, but also, and especially, upon the help I derived (and still get) from Those who stand behind this movement. Without Them, I should have been powerless to breast and push back the adverse current of hatred which was sweeping in against us. With Their aid I untwisted every coil of the Missionary serpent which was trying to crush us into a mass of broken ribs and bruised flesh. Not one of my readers can realise what we had to go through, and I especially, in those dark days. On the one hand, the active opposition of the sneering public and the

faint-heartedness of many of our colleagues whom I had the right to count upon as standing beside me, staunch and true; the outright desertion of others; a poorly filled treasury with increasing expenses to meet; a pressure on me to consent to certain radical changes in the Society's policy and platform; and, finally, my compulsory separation from H. P. B., who for eleven years had been working with me in close accord of general aims and ideals. On the other hand, the tragical situation of H. P. B. herself, virtually an exile packed away in a cheap little Italian inn on the slope of Mount Vesuvius, racked with rheumatic gout, ordered imperatively by Dr. Mary Scharlieb to keep herself perfectly quiet on peril of life, suffering privations that I had not the money to alleviate, chafing like a wounded lioness over her inability to fight her slanderers, and writing me the sharp and angry letters that might naturally be expected from her under the circumstances.

My earnest desire was to carry out the Doctor's wishes, which I knew to be based on simple common sense; the one absolutely necessary thing for H. P. B. to do, if she would save her life, was to keep perfectly quiet in some retired spot out of reach of her friends or enemies, and especially to abstain from correspondence or newspaper reading. She was like a powder-magazine, and just an incautious bit of gossip in a letter was enough to make her explode. The Doctor so warned her before leaving, and I so wrote her in the letter, to which she replied in March. "Calm your fears," she said,

"for, *with the exception of Solovioff* and Miss . . . I know of no European Theosophists with whom I would correspond, or to whom I would divulge my address." To Solovioff—fancy that! To that contemptible person, who took advantage of her guileless confidence and her fervent love for her countrymen, to watch and spy upon her daily actions, inveigle her into confidential correspondence, and betray her in a book gotten up for pecuniary profit and written in her very mother language and published in the motherland she so adored to the day of her death. The staunch souls who were only anxious to prove how loyal they could be, she saw not before her mind's eye; but to this poor creature of a professional *litterateur*, because he was a Russian and played the devoted friend, she gave her confidence and revealed the necessary secret of her retreat. And to crush me with the sense of her displeasure for daring to doubt her discretion, she addresses me, after ten years of chumship, as "My dear Colonel Olcott"!

"Writing as I do," she says in a letter of no date, but from Torre del Greco, "in a damp room at the north side of Vesuvius, my feet on uncarpeted stone flags, and in Italy, where people suffer indoors of cold more than in Russia, for stoves are unknown and the cold air circulates from under doors and through windows *ad libitum*, I feel pretty sure to have, notwithstanding my every precaution, a relapse of rheumatic gout, unless you do what I must ask you to do. If you have not sent me away to die, and since there is no money for a better *appartement* or

to buy carpets and rugs, please send me . . . the old carpet bought at Bombay, with a few other things we want . . . I can cut the carpet in two and thus avoid agony and suffering. It is raining and cold and damp even now, while in September it becomes so cold that even the old landlord told me no one, least of all an invalid, could stop here after August. Wherever I go, I shall need carpets, and they are a luxury unknown in Italy and France, etc., etc." ; the letter being full to the end with a statement of her miseries. How would any of our readers have felt under such a state of things ? And to think that she, whose teachings have been the consolation and guiding lamp of thousands, and of many who are surrounded with luxuries, that this poor, stricken woman, this lighter up of dark paths and dispenser of spiritual brightness, should have been crying out across the seas to her old chum, as poor as herself, in accents of distress ; thus doubling and quadrupling the load of care he had to carry behind his smiles and jests, for the sake of the growing multitude who had embarked in our movement and would have felt themselves dropping into a gulf of despair if it had failed. Is it too much, then, to say that naught but the knowledge of the Unseen Master Helpers would have carried me through that time and landed me at last on the farther shore of success ? "For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone : the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." Later on, she settled among friends in London, who saw that she

lacked no comfort and did their best to lighten her every burden ; but think of her in the cold spring of 1885 on the northern slope of Vesuvius, living from hand to mouth, and writing at "a rickety old table" that with great difficulty she had procured, and with her poor gouty feet on the cold stones of the uncarpeted floor !

## CHAPTER XXII

## H. P. B. IN EXILE

"CHAFING like a caged lioness" is just the expression to use to convey an idea of H. P. B.'s state of mind throughout that period of three months which she spent at Torre del Greco in 1885. What wonder, when one recalls to mind the circumstances of her compulsory exile from the Adyar home that we had built up together and that she loved. This is one of the things most distasteful about which she complained in her letters to me. Then it was most galling to keep quiet, to so brave a hereditary fighter, child of an ancient family whose swords had always flashed in the forefront of battle from generation to generation, when called for by their sovereign. To her, as to them, the ultimate chances of conflict were of no account; the overpowering instinct was to give battle without counting the odds. But we, her colleagues, mindful of the quips and quillets of the Law, and of what her discomfiture in Court would mean to the Society, overbore her wish and wrung from her an acquiescence in the policy of

silence and forbearance towards our enemies. While at Adyar with us, she saw that we were right, but in her lonesome exile in Italy the aspect of things changed, and she upbraided me in letter after letter for what she called our "cowardice," and our haste to sacrifice her as our scapegoat. She was utterly wrong, of course; but argumentation was useless, and remonstrance a waste of time and ink. She was of a most trustful disposition in one side of her character, and hence we see her constantly deceived and victimised by people whose effusive protestations masked sometimes the basest plans of treachery.

From this present point of view, after the lapse of thirteen years (*viz.*, 1899), when people have been sifted through the sieve of time, it is mournful to read her letters and see how her most lauded courtiers have rewarded her trust with blackest treason. To emphasise her charges against us of Adyar, she quotes their names and sayings over and over again; she even sends me notes of theirs to her, condemnatory of myself and fulsomely laudatory of herself. Solovioff had passed five weeks with her at Würzburg, her second place of refuge, so-and-so a fortnight, so-and-so was coming—all of whom turned enemies later on.

The form of the *Theosophist* was changed—it will be remembered—at the beginning of Vol. VII, from quarto to octavo, as the larger size was found to be inconvenient for binding and also for carriage through the mails. She was in sole charge of it then, but had

appointed as her assistant Mr. Cooper-Oakley, M.A., a fine scholar, and put him in full charge when leaving home for Naples. Certain malicious persons, whose identity is now known by me since looking over her papers and our correspondence, had put it into her head that I meant to remove her name from the title-page, because we dare not carry the obloquy of the connection any longer, and that this was but part of a scheme to pitch her out altogether. Certainly there was not a shadow of truth in all this, but she was so ill, her mind was in so distressing a state of nervous commotion, that she at once plunged at me. I was called all the harsh names conceivable, my supposed delinquency was stigmatised as sheer poltroonery, and she gave me solemn notice that if any other name than hers, save T. Subba Row's or mine, were put on the magazine, she should not write another word for it! But in due course the new issue of the *Theosophist* reached her, and she then wrote :

"Well, I *knew* that the accusation of your taking off my name from the *Theosophist* was all bosh. But they all understood it and 'felt sure' it was so—even to H. S. It was in consequence of Nivaran Babu's innocent remark : 'The magazine is coming out in its new garb, and Mr. Cooper-Oakley is to be its Editor.' They said that since C.-O. had been its Editor for nearly a year already, why should Nivaran write this as news unless his name were to appear on the cover of the magazine, etc.? Well, I caught fire too.

But now that's at an end . . . Anyhow, the *Theosophist* looks very neat now—of course, a great deal better than before. I send for it a long article, 'Have Animals Souls ? ' I shall write, this week, one or two more."

Then she does the very unusual thing, for her, of asking my pardon, but on the basis of mutuality. "Let us," she says, "forgive each other, be indulgent for each other's failings, and cease fighting and back-biting like Christian sectarians ! " That shows the wonderfully elastic quality of her mind. In an instant she withdraws from an *impasse*, and carries off the other fellow in her retreat ! Fancying this sort of thing as recurring weekly or fortnightly, along with the normal strain of executive duties at that crisis, the reader may gauge the inner life I had to lead until our ship came into smoother waters. For all the grief caused me by her cruel letters I do not, now, hold her responsible ; for her wounded spirit was played upon by unprincipled third parties, whose hope was to separate her from the Society and use her power and talents for their own selfish ends ; she was not in a state to be reasonable, and ten years of trial had proved to her that I should be ready to let myself be chopped into mincemeat rather than desert my duty or be unfaithful to my holy Teacher ; so let her say or do what she liked, it would make no difference.

When she really set herself to looking into people's motives, however, she could do it. Thus, she unmasks to me the secret plans and speculations of

one man closely connected with her Society work at that time, and whose unfavorable remarks about myself she often quotes. No doubt all this heckling was just the discipline I needed, and undoubtedly still need as much as ever, to bring me down to my bearings, but I can't say it was nice. I am not like the negro boy who, on being found pounding his finger on an anvil, explained that it was done because "it felt so good when getting well". I could have spared three-fourths of the discipline to any other needy neophyte without regret, although doubtless, it was best for me to have it.

H. P. B. had one trait of character that has made her memory so precious to most of her former colleagues—winsomeness. She might drive you almost mad with her sayings and doings, might make you feel ready to run as far away from her as possible, yet when she changed from one extreme to the other in her treatment of you, as she would in a flash, and looked and spoke to you with a sort of childlike blandness, your anger would vanish and you would love her in spite of herself.

There were, besides, special elements about H. P. B. which gave her power over others, *viz.*:

(*a*) Her amazing occult knowledge and phenomena-working powers, together with her relation to the hidden MASTERS.

(*b*) Her sparkling talents, especially as a conversationist, with her social accomplishments, wide travels, and extraordinary adventures.

(*c*) Her insight into problems of philology, racial origins, fundamental bases of religions, and keys to old mysteries and symbols; certainly not the result of study, for a more restless and eccentric student there never was. She was not all smoothness or courtesy—far from it: when the mood was on her she was all that, but at other times she spared nobody, no matter how rich, powerful, or highly placed they might be. As to trained literary faculty, she had none; she wrote under inspiration, thoughts flashed through her brain like meteors, scenes painted themselves before her mental vision and died out often when but half caught, parenthesis bristled through her paragraphs so as to sometimes interminably stretch out her sentences, and she would—as it now appears—catch up and use other men's writings as though they were her own—intent only on fitting their formulated thoughts into the working out of her theme. In short, she was a genius in the same sense as Shakespeare and others, who took materials as they were found, and worked them into the amalgam upon which they put the stamp of their own individuality. Take her two great books, for instance. She has sinned an hundred times against the canons of literary usage as regards acknowledgment of authors drawn upon, but upon both is spread the golden web of her own high powers, and *The Secret Doctrine* is found, year by year, more and more like an inexhaustible mine of occult knowledge. That is what makes widening

circles of students reverence her memory, and turn their backs in scorn upon those pigmies, like Solovioff, who work like ants to distil acids to squirt on her clothing.

Her occult powers made her run after by Spiritualists, impelled by avid curiosity ; discredited by men of science, who mistrusted all such pretentions; hated by the modern priests and pastors, who ought to have been able to cap her phenomena by like ones of their own, but could not ; and feared by the orthodox multitude, who saw in her a black sorceress and dared not come near her. This uncanny evil reputation even extended to myself by reason of our association. "Dear me ! Colonel Olcott," said Lady X to me one day at her luncheon-table, "how very different you are from what I had expected." "And what—may I venture to ask"—I said, "had your ladyship expected ?" "Oh, you know," she replied, "we all thought that if we should meet you, you would throw on us some magic spell ; but, really, you are just like ourselves !" This feeling among her acquaintances accounts for much of the latitude accorded her as to conduct and conversation. The same instinct makes the courtier think the King can do no wrong, and society pass over as "eccentricity" the millionaire's solecisms in manners, which they would revolt against in a poor man. One never knew at what moment she might do some wonderful feat of magic, or perchance whisper in their ears some message from the unseen Powers. Then, again, it was a

frequent experience that the scoldings she gave her intimate friends proved susbequently to have been most timely checks in a wrong path, turnings into the right one and blessed kindnesses. Association with her was a continual excitement, and the most sluggish temperament was roused into some show of activity. She was truly a great woman—to confound, if we may, the carcase with its indwelling entity, which seemed to me as far removed as possible from the ideal of the gentler sex.

After stopping three months at Torre del Greco, she went to Würzburg which, as she writes me, bids fair to become a sort of Theosophical Medina, since she was exiled from the Mecca of her heart, Adyar. "I have not much time now," she writes (October 28, 1885), "with the *Secret Doctrine*. I am only at the middle of Part I, but shall in a month or two send you the first six sections. I take from *Isis* only facts, leaving out everything in the shape of dissertations, attacks on Christianity and Science—in short, all the useless stuff, and all that has lost its interest. Only myths, symbols, and dogmas explained from an *esoteric* point of view. It is actually and *de facto* a new work entirely. Cycles are explained, along with everything else, from their occult bearings. I wish you had sent me the Preface, or Introduction."

In this same most interesting letter she sketched out a form of communication she wanted me to put into the *Theosophist* in her name. I find in it the outline of the whole teaching now being given out by

our chief Theosophical writers, as to the persistence of the Individuality : " the same Divine monad, plus all its essence of compound spiritualities from its endless rebirths, must come down again and be reborn in a higher, hundredfold more perfected and pure earth or planet—in short, commence again its grand cycle of reincarnations."

Among the devoted friends who thronged to her at Würzburg were the Countess Wachtmeister (ever the same faithful, loyal woman of generous heart and invincible devotion), and Frau Gustav Gebhard, of Elberfeld, whom I loved so dearly and regret so sincerely since she left us. These dear ladies nursed H. P. B. in her sore illness, being like younger sisters in their assiduous ministrations. Dr. Hübbe Schleiden and Madame Gebhard's son Franz were there also, and from this group I received a most important document. It is a complete vindication of my beloved " chum " H. P. B. from the foul charge of the woman Coulomb and those who echoed her falsehood, that while at Cairo she became the mother of illicit offspring. The author of the document was (perhaps still is) the Royal Medical Director of that District, and the certificate was given by request of Madame Blavatsky's friends, who foresaw the immense future importance it might have. Following, is a translation of its text :

" Medical Certificate

"The undersigned testifies, as requested, that Madame Blavatsky, of Bombay—New York Corresponding Secretary of the Theosophical Society—is at

present under the medical treatment of the undersigned. She suffers from *Anteflexio Uteri*, most probably from the day of her birth; because, as proven by a minute examination, she has never borne a child, nor has she had any gynæcological illness.

(Sd.) "DR. LEON OPPENHEIM,

"WÜRZBURG, *3rd November*, 1885.

"The signature of Doctor Leon Oppenheim is hereby officially attested. WÜRZBURG, *3rd November*, 1885.

"The Royal Medical Officer of the District.

(Sd.) "DR. MED. ROEDER.

"We, the undersigned, hereby certify that the above is a correct translation of the German original before us. WÜRZBURG, *November 4th*, 1885.

(Sd.) "HÜBBE SCHLEIDEN.

( ,, ) "FRANZ GEBHARD."

The document, worded as delicately as possible, was intended to cover the whole question of H. P. B.'s moral history from her youth upward. She herself, as well as the friends in question, wrote me about the circumstances, and expressed the hope that I would keep the paper with care against the future time when I could make the best use of it. I think that time is

the present, for now that the bitterness of that olden epoch has given place to a more charitable feeling towards her, and her underlying greatness has gradually become more and more recognised, I believe that the publication of this document, of unquestionable authority, in its proper place in this chronological narrative, will give pleasure and consolation to her friends and pupils, and afford them some sort of a shield with which to ward off the arrows of slander, shot at the heart of our benefactress. As the years roll by and this movement of ours consolidates itself upon its permanent foundation, this rugged personality behind which a giant Individuality worked for humanity will be more and more uplifted, grow brighter and brighter. For sayeth not the Buddhist aphorism : Good men shine from afar, like the snowy peaks of Himavat ; while bad men are unseen, like arrows shot in the dark ? "Peace to thee, H. P. B. !" is now the loving cry of thousands.

## CHAPTER XXIII

## TENDER OF RESIGNATION

LIVING in a country where omens and portents are traced in the chirp of a lizard, the cry and flight of a bird, and in innumerable other natural phenomena, what wonder if one should in time be more or less affected by such ideas, and that on the occurrence of any unusual thing the idea of its possibly occult significance should present itself to one's mind? On awaking, on the morning of 7th October (1885), I received an unpleasant shock. The splendid portrait of one of the Masters lay inverted on the floor, the top downward, having been detached from the nail where it had hung in my room,[1] at some time during the night. The cord had been cut as if with a knife, and the picture had turned a summersault over a tall bookcase, and leaned itself against the glass doors without injuring them or itself, save at one corner where its heavy gilt frame had been a little crushed. I was amazed at the accident and distressed lest it might indicate the displeasure of the Master for some serious fault that I had committed. I stood there and looked and pondered a long time, trying to recall

[1] Previously to the building of the present picture-annex of the Adyar Library.

any sin of omission or commission which had brought upon me so phenomenal a rebuke, but I could find nothing. Yet the clean cut through the cord belied any accidental rupture of the fibres, and the fact that the canvas had not been torn when the picture was falling and striking the tiled floor made the affair mysterious. No one whom I consulted gave me any reasonable explanation, and I was worried all that day. At last the puzzle solved itself ; the accident had been caused by the squirrels, which then infested the house and made their nests in the drawers of our furniture and behind the books on our shelves, doing much damage in various ways. They had gnawed the cord to get fibrous nesting material, and the picture had probably been let down easily by the friction of the dragging of the cord over the nail. But this did not weaken my resentment against the little rodents, for I got very angry when I bethought me of the irreparable loss that would have been caused by the destruction of the canvas on which was painted that divine face. So I straightway had wire-gauze frames fitted in all the doorways and window-openings of rooms where protection was needed against the ravages of these pretty little pests.

I do not recollect whether or not I have mentioned a scheme propounded by an eccentric member of the Society to buy up the *Theosophist* with the idea of suppressing it and in its place starting a new magazine, under the title of *Karma*. At any rate, such a proposal was made to me, which only as a matter of news I reported to H. P. B., never imagining that she would think that I should seriously

entertain it; but one day I received from her a cablegram declining to sell (which cost her, as she wrote me, forty marks, or £ 2 !). In due course of mail a letter came, in which she said she would "as soon think of cutting off her hand" as do it! She added some uncomplimentary remarks about the person making the offer.

A few days later I lectured at Pachiappah's Hall on "The Peril of Indian Youth." A Committee of Hindu schoolboys took notes and wrote out the lecture for publication at their own cost. Thousands of copies have since been sold. Their peril, I showed, lay in the fact of their irreligious education by Government and their anti-nationalistic education by the Missionaries, whose policy was to destroy their reverence for their national religion, which to a Hindu is the spur of all action, his guide and pole-star: to rob him of this is to leave him like a rudderless ship on the sea of life. This, in fact, has been the keynote of all our teaching in Asia from the very commencement; and the creation of the Central Hindu College at Benares by Mrs. Besant has been made possible thereby; it is the harvest after twenty years' sowing of thought-seed.

In November I went to Karur and formed a local Branch. One of the 18 Siddhas or high Adepts, recognised in Southern India, by name Karura, is buried in the temple at this place, and, according to popular tradition, is still alive in his tomb, sitting in *samādhi*.

On my return home, "Ānanda" and I spent a good deal of time in planning, measuring,

and calculating the cost of the alterations of the house-front and *porte-cochere*, which resulted in making the present Convention Hall. According to our closest ciphering, we thought it could be done for Rs. 2,500, whereas the plan approved at the previous Convention for a separate building called for an outlay of about Rs. 15,000. The approval of our resident councillors, Messrs. R. Raghoonath Row, P. Sreenivas Row, and T. Subba Row, having been obtained, workmen were set to breaking ground the very next day, and from that time onward they were driven at a rate of speed more often seen in America than in slow-moving India. The foundations and retaining walls were built, the earth-filling done, the marble steps transferred to the outside of the extension, a temporary roof of posts and palm-leaves lined with white cotton cloth constructed, decorations made, crystal lustres hung, and the Hall made ready for occupancy within twenty-seven days—deducting four days when it rained heavily. The Convention met at the usual time (December 27) in its own premises, and all the delegates expressed their complete satisfaction. A photograph of the empty Hall that was taken at the time, now possesses historical interest. The improvement saved us over Rs. 400 that year, which we should have had to pay for the hire of a temporary *pandal* or wigwam. The improvements cost only Rs. 2,600, one hundred more than the estimate.

The news from France at that time was encouraging, no less than four or five leading magazines having admitted serious articles on Theosophy by

first-class writers. But the public mind of France has for many years been uncongenial to the discussion of metaphysics. The friends of that "distressful country" and of her cheerful, enthusiastic people —none are more so than Americans—have long been saddened in looking critically upon her spiritual condition. As a reaction from her crass materialism there has been a recrudescence of superstitious belief, as evidenced by the pilgrimages to Lourdes and other presumably favored shrines, and by the excitement over the jeremiads of Mlle. Couêdon: a great attention has also been given to the subject of Hypnotism. But her public men seem to be madly clutching for money and the pleasures of sense, and the current of egoism sweeps everything before it. The books of Zola are, I fear, not so much exaggerations as social photographs. Moral corruption, formerly confined to the effete aristocracy, has rotted the middle and is rotting the peasant class. This is not only an impression from personal observation during my frequent visits to the country, but I have it from long talks with persons of the highest social rank and most conservative views, who have bemoaned the facts while admitting them. When a country descends so low as to crown vice with laurels and make virtue a butt for jest; when it fills its shop windows with pornographic books and pictures, and crowds a theatre to see a shameless hussy undress herself on the stage, and she sits to the photographer for a series of views of herself in her lascivious scenes, which are sold by thousands; when a Dreyfus case—*i.e.*, the death of personal liberty and civil law

—has become possible ; when all these things are, what is the use of talking Theosophy to the general public and inviting the nation to rise to the higher ideal of human perfectibility ? Yet things were never, can never be, so bad but that a large minority of true, noble souls can be found, and so let every one of us send to Capt. Courmes, Dr. Th. Pascal, M. Gillard, and their little contingent of valiant workers, the fervent prayers of our hearts for the success of their efforts to spread Theosophical teachings in their sunny, smiling land—the cradle of many a hero, many a genius, many a great teacher, many a divinely-inspired poet, many a master of science and arts.[1] For my part, I shall never altogether despair of France until she commits national suicide. *Absit omen !*

In the same month of December Mr. W. T. Brown, the " Poor Brown " of Dr. Hartmann and Mr. R. Harte, published his autobiographical pamphlet entitled *My Life*, to the regret of his well-wishers at Adyar. It shows him to have been at the time an earnest young man but an emotional sentimentalist, quite unfit for practical life in the world. He had chopped and changed before coming to us, and has been doing it pretty much ever since ; the latest news being that he has turned Catholic, taken the soutane, kept it on only a few days, became again a laic, and is now teaching in a Roman Catholic college in Madras Presidency, and married to an Eurasian widow lady of ripe age. May he prosper in his undertakings, and find

[1] Since the above was published (1899) a great change for the better has occurred. Our movement has quadrupled its strength in France.

that peace of mind for which he has so long been hoping.

The Delegates to the Tenth Annual Convention began arriving on 23rd December, and thence-forward poured in by every train and steamer until the 27th, when the sessions began. Among the most welcome was Baron Ernst von Weber, President of the (German) International Anti-vivisection Society, who represented our German Branch. In my Annual Address I gave a retrospect of the history of our first decade as well as my usual glance over the movement in all parts of the world. I strongly pleaded for the creation of an Oriental Library at the Headquarters, showing how we had helped in the revival of Sanskrit learning in India and the opening of Sanskrit schools, citing the unanimous testimony of the Indian Press as to the national services we had rendered. "What an anomaly it is," said I, "that we have not at Headquarters a Sanskrit library! We ought to be able to attract to Adyar the cleverest Brahman Pandits and the most learned Western Orientalists by the size and value of our library. If we and our successors do our whole duty, this can be made a second Alexandria, and on these lovely grounds a new Serapion may arise. . . . It may sound strangely for us to be mentioning these august names in connection with our infant Theosophical movement, but, gentlemen, wait twenty years and you shall see what it will grow into. We are but agitators and poor scholars now, hardly able to push on through the obstacles, but let us keep a dauntless soul and an unwavering faith in ourselves and our cause, and there will arise, perhaps

in far-away lands and least-expected ways, friends who will snatch the laurel of imperishable fame by giving their names to our desired Adyar Library and Museum." I suggested that we should begin the work as a monument of the completion of our first decade. Was this not prophetic? See how friends, not then members of the Society—Carl H. Hartmann, of Brisbane; Charles A. White, of Seattle; Annie Besant, of London; Salvador de la Fuente, and others —have arisen to help us with their money and influence to build up the Society and make the Adyar Library what I had hoped for it before the twenty years have come and gone. We had no ancient MSS. then, and only a couple of hundred or so of books; whereas now we have sixteen thousand volumes in the two beautiful libraries that we have opened, and the prospect of the command of ample means in due course. With all the earnestness I can express, I again appeal to our members and sympathisers to hasten, by their individual exertions, the day when scholars will make pilgrimages to Adyar to study what they may make the finest Oriental literary collection in the world.

In the same official Address I tendered my resignation of the Presidency. "If you will allow me," I remarked, "I shall gladly retire to that life of study and self-improvement which has such attractions for me—and which neglected early opportunities make so necessary. The time is a suitable one, for I have served my decade, and some other person ought to be given his chance to display his abilities. I pray you to consider this seriously. . . . I hope,

therefore, with all seriousness and earnestness, that you will suffer no personal liking for myself, no thought of the brotherly affection that binds us together, to prevent your choosing as my successor some one of our colleagues who would be better able to carry the movement on to the end of the next decade."

An intelligent person knows better than anybody else his or her own limitations, and I have ever from the first been convinced that an abler and better man than myself ought to fill the post of chief executive in so vast an organisation as ours. I had had every advantage of early education that the best American schools and universities could supply, but, like hundreds of other sons of good families, had idled away the time which ought to have been given to study, never having dreamt that I should ever be called to take up such serious public duties as these. As for the bare honors of office, I cared absolutely nothing, and I was perfectly sincere in asking that the Convention should let me retire and choose my successor. But my too lenient colleagues would not listen to it: in the second day's session, when I was temporarily absent and Maj.-Gen. H. R. Morgan was in the chair, Resolutions were adopted requesting Madame Blavatsky to return to Adyar as soon as her health should be restored, declaring that "the charges brought against her by her enemies had not been proven, and that our affection and respect for her continue unabated," and that "the President-Founder has, by his unremitting zeal, self-sacrifice, courage, industry, virtuous life, and intelligence, won the confidence of members of the Society and endeared

himself to them throughout the world ; and (2) that as this Convention cannot for one moment entertain the thought of his retiring from the Society which he has done so much to build up, and has conducted safely through various perils by his prudence and practical wisdom, they request him to continue his invaluable services to the Society to the last ".

I hope I may be pardoned the possible bad taste of publishing these too complimentary Resolutions, in view of their historical importance. They show that the policy which the Founders had pursued from the beginning and throughout the first decade of the Society's career was approved ; that H.P.B. had the unbroken confidence and love of her colleagues, despite the worst attacks of the Missionaries and their allies ; that the length of her exile was to be governed entirely by the state of her bodily health, and that she would be gladly welcomed on her return ; finally, that it was the general wish that I should continue to hold office throughout my life. What public servant would not be glad and proud to have on record so gratifying a testimonial of the approval of his colleagues of the way in which he had done his duty ? And how sad it is to see the dishonest policy of falsehood that is being followed out by the leaders of the party who seceded from the Society under the leadership of the late Mr. Judge. Poor babies in practical experience !

On the third day of the Convention a Resolution was adopted approving of the plan suggested by the President-Founder for the completion of the Convention Hall and the erection of a building

for the Sanskrit Library and Picture Gallery, and he was "requested to carry it out as soon as practicable".

The Recording Secretary's Report showed that 117 Branches had been chartered within the decade ; that the two Founders had given about Rs. 35,000 to the Society, and that it went over to the next year with an almost empty cash-box but unlimited confidence and enthusiasm. On the whole, the Convention proved a very great success, and it broke up in the best of feeling all around. One of the pleasantest features of the meeting was the glowing and eloquent speech made at the Anniversary celebration in Pachiappah's Hall, by Prof. G. N. Chakravarti, Delegate from the N. W. P.

A fearful tragedy occurred, however, in the People's Park, Madras, during the days of the Convention ; some three or four hundred persons were burnt alive in a panic that seized them when some palm-leaf shops and fences accidentally caught fire at a People's Fair that was in progress. The reason for my mentioning it is that the wave of agony that it created in the Astral Light reached H. P. B. in her lodgings in Belgium, and threw her into the greatest excitement about our safety. She tells the story thus :

"OSTENDE, *January* 4, 1886.

"MY DEAR OLCOTT,—This is the first time that I have smoked and passed a whole New Year's Day quite alone, as if I were in my tomb. Not a soul the whole day, as the Countess is gone to London, and I have no one but Louise [her maid] with me in the big

house. A queer thing happened. I had been writing all day, when, needing a book, I got up and approached my *table de nuit*, over which hangs the photograph of Adyar and the river. I had looked long and earnestly at it on 27th December and tried to imagine what you were all doing. But on that day (New Year's), occupied in finishing the *Archaic Period*, I had not given it a thought. Suddenly I saw the whole picture blazing as with fire. I got scared, thinking it meant blood to the head ; looked again ; the river, the trees, and the house were all glowing as from a reflection of fire. Twice a wave of flame, like a long serpentine tongue, crossed the river and licked the trees and our house, and then receded and everything disappeared. I was struck with surprise and horror, and my first thought was that Adyar must be on fire. For two days all Ostende was drunk (from the festival excesses) and I had no papers. I was in agony. Then on the morning of 2nd January I wrote to . . . (in England), begging him to look over the papers and see if there was no fire at Adyar or in Madras on that day. On the 3rd he telegraphed me : '*Great fire at People's Park, Madras* : 300 *natives burnt. Don't bother.*' To-day I saw the notice in the *Independance Belge* myself. What is it ? and why should I connect Adyar with that Fair and the poor 300 Hindus burnt ? Are there any victims among the Theosophists ? I am positively in great fear. I hope *you* were not there. You could not leave Adyar on that day, could you ? It is terrible, that. And that young fool to telegraph : 'Don't bother ; only 300 natives burnt !' Well, I wrote him to say that I

would have felt less 'bother' if it had been 600 Europeans—confound his impudence!"

This is a most instructive psychological phenomenon. The "wave of agony" of which I spoke touched Adyar, of course, first of all, being so near, and from me passed on to H. P. B., with whom I was spiritually so intimately connected. In the fact of her seeing the sheet of fire reaching us from the direction of the People's Park—the North—across the Adyar River, on whose Southern bank our house stands—we see that my explanation is valid; while, as for the tragedy being communicated to her from me, that was as natural as that, when she died in London in 1891, I was made aware of it in Sydney, N.S.W. We used to call ourselves "twins," and twins we were so far as community of sympathies within the lines of our work was concerned. No great wonder, considering how we had worked together. Moreover, one of our Madras members was burnt. I had visited the Fair with Mr. Cooper-Oakley and Dr. J. N. Cook, and left it just before the fire broke out; so that our narrow escape intensified the horror which the awful tragedy caused us to feel. But my thoughts did not go out to H. P. B. in connection with it, else in all probability she would have received telepathically from me a more accurate picture of the occurrence.

Near the Sea Customs building, opposite the Harbor at Madras, stands a solid, two-storey brick building, ornamented outside with inlaid encaustic tiles, and which is occupied as a Police Station. I have been

told that it was built out of the money realised by the sale of the melted gold and silver ornaments that were found in the pile of cremated corpses at the Fair grounds. The bodies were consumed beyond possibility of recognition, and the jewels reduced to formless metallic masses. I had had it in my mind to take two of the lady Delegates in our Convention to see the Fair, but something (what something ?) put it out of my mind. I shudder to think what might have happened if they had gone with me ; been enticed by the novelty of the spectacle to get me to stop until the fire had broken out ; had been themselves seized with panic, and broken away from me and rushed with the mad multitude into the raging flames.

## CHAPTER XXIV

## CREMATION CEREMONY IN CEYLON

How much was done by us, in the first decade of the Society's existence, towards realising the objects of its formation, will be seen in a few statistics. The *Theosophist* was founded in October, 1879, and there appeared in its first ten volumes 429 pages (royal 8vo) of translations from the Sanskrit, and 935 pages of original articles on Eastern religious, philosophical, and scientific subjects, mainly by writers of Oriental birth; several hundred lectures were given by myself, besides hundreds more by our colleagues in India, America, and Ceylon; the Buddhistic educational movement was started and vigorously pushed in Ceylon; a number of Sanskrit and Anglo-Sanskrit schools were begun in India; H. P. B. visited Europe once, and I several times; Branches and Centres were established in Europe and America; a considerable number of books were published in different languages; I travelled thousands of miles in India and went to most of the villages in the Maritime Provinces of Ceylon; a heavy correspondence was kept up with all parts of the world, and as we crossed the threshold of the eleventh year, the erection of the building for the Adyar Oriental Library was begun

at the lovely Headquarters which had been bought for the Society and paid for. In my Diary of 1886 the entry for January 1st says :

"In the name of the Masters and for the sake of their cause, I, Henry S. Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, this day turned the first sod for the Sanskrit Library and Museum at Adyar. The only witnesses present were T. Vijiaraghava Charlu and two of the gardeners. The impulse to do it came so strongly—after staking out the ground for the building—that I did not call any of the other people in the house."

A very simple affair, one will see : no speeches, no music, no processions, no humbug of any sort, just a real beginning of what is meant to be a great work, accompanied by a declaration of the motive at bottom : one which, though not heard by more than two or three spectators, yet certainly must have been heard and noted in the quarter where the Wise Ones sit and watch the actions of men.

Work was not begun on the building for some little time, however, as plans had to be perfected, money provided for, and materials bought. On the 8th I consulted Mr. C. Sambiah, F.T.S., a retired Sub-Engineer and most excellent colleague of ours, about the building, and he agreed to take it in charge in conjunction with "Ānanda" and myself. I made myself personally responsible for the money, and we were soon ready. But there were first the religious prejudices of the bricklayers to be considered ; they would not begin a new work save at the auspicious hour, whatever temptations might be offered.

Saturday morning, the 16th, proved to be the critical moment, so a Brahman was called, and at the north-east corner of the ground, where I had started the trench, he recited slokas, laid out a broken cocoanut, red powder, betel nuts, saffron and mango-leaves, on a tray ; then he burnt camphor and threw into the thick, smoky flame seeds of various varieties of gram (pulse), sprinkled the place with drops of water from mango-leaves, and recited many Sanskrit mantrams of supposed fiend-smiting potency. Bits of ripe plantain, roasted gram, chopped rice, and brown sugar were laid about the fire for the benefit of any hungry bhutas and pisachas who might be idling about, and, finally, flowers were showered into the trench and the ceremony came to an end. After that, the masons were ready for work, and so we set them at it. Mr. Sambiah took professional charge and opened a book of accounts in which every load of bricks, sand, lime, and other materials, every foot of teak timber, and every day's "coolie" (work) was entered with scrupulous care and integrity. He and we two others (T. V. Charlu and myself) have always been in close accord upon every work of construction or repairs that the exigencies of our corporate property have demanded, and have used the utmost economy possible. It is necessary that this should be stated, because it has sometimes been uncharitably said—of course by those who never had practical experience in the owning and care of real-estate like that of our Society—that I have wasted money in bricks and mortar : such people have no idea of the cost of keeping up such large buildings, bought when they

were some forty years old, nor realise that as a Society grows it must have increased accommodations, the same as a family. However, this need not be dwelt upon further.

In my entry of January 3rd I find it recorded that our friend Judge P. Sreenivas Row, F.T.S., "generously pays not only the cost of feeding the delegates, but also for the *pandals*, decorations, and lights used at the Convention." He had drafted for me the *Dwaita Catechism* for my proposed series of elementary handbooks of the ancient religions, and at this time I received from him the MS. and edited it for publication.

Baron Ernst von Weber had gone on a short tour at the close of the Convention, but returned on 11th January and sailed for Calcutta on the 17th. He was a good-natured man, and heartily entered into a joke of mine for the amusement and instruction of the resident Indian members of the Headquarters staff. On the evening of the 15th he donned his gold-embroidered court dress, with his orders, cocked hat, silk stockings, pumps, sword, and all, and pretended to have been sent to me as special Ambassador from his Sovereign, to convey to the President of the Theosophical Society His Majesty's compliments and congratulations on the completion of our first decade. I made the Hindus take up positions to the right and left in the vestibule, advanced as Marshal of Ceremonies to the columned front entrance to receive and conduct the Ambassador, led him up the vestibule, and announced his name, dignities, and functions; then wheeled around to face him as P.T.S., heard his (coached) address,

responded to it with solemn gravity, and hung on the Baron's button a small tin shield emblazoned with H. P. B.'s escutcheon, to which I gave the dignity of an order with a fanciful name, and begged him to wear it as a proof to his august Master of the value I placed upon his brotherly message. The mock levee being then broken up, the Baron and I had to laugh heartily on seeing the unsophisticated wonder displayed by the auditory at his whole "outfit," every article of which they successively inspected and asked about. His white kid gloves surprised them quite as much as anything else: they did not know what to make of them, but said they were very strange things to wear, "very soft and smooth". Of course, I know that this innocent bit of tomfoolery will be deprecated by those of our members who take life lugubriously and fancy that the P.T.S. must be a yogi-ascetic, but it would have been just the thing to suit H. P. B.'s temperament, and she would have entered into it with zest. In how much of such harmless nonsense did she not indulge in those old days, when we laughed and joked while carrying our heavy burden up hill. In truth, but for our light-heartedness it would perhaps have crushed us: a good laugh is more restful than laudanum, and mirth than morphia. I know Mahatmas, my lugubrious friend, who actually laugh!

On the day of Baron von Weber's departure, a British army captain called and asked permission to look at the River Bungalow, in which he had been born. This will give an idea of the necessary age of the Adyar buildings.

On the 19th occurred the annual "floating festival" at the Mylapore temple tank, and we went to see it. It is a very striking picture of Indian national life. Symbolically, it typifies the floating of Vishnu on the face of the waters at the beginning of a Manvantara or new cosmic period. The ascending steps on the four sides of the tank, which mount from the water's brim, are lit up with *chirāgs*, or clay lamps ; and the small temple at the tank's centre blazes with light, while its white stucco of chunam is turned into the semblance of old ivory by the soft light of the silvery moon. On a raft of catamaran fishing-boats, that has been prepared by the coast fishermen as an act of time-honored feudal service, the temple idol has been placed in a small pagoda covered with glittering tinsel. Its hereditary attendant Brahmans, naked to the waist, but with two white cloths, one wrapped about them from the waist downward, the other folded into a strip and laid across the shoulders, chant slokas. Standard-bearers wave their quaint banners. Devadasis, or temple nautch-girls, sway before the idol in graceful motions. Colored fires of all bright hues blaze at the corners of the raft. Musicians waken the echoes with their strident sounds, and the floating raft is poled seven times around the tank, in the presence of a vast multitude of dark-skinned people who watch it from the bank, the disturbed water reflecting back the while the shining splendor of the earthly lamps and fires, and the silver radiance of the moon and stars far up in the blue vault. Anything more picturesque in the way of a human festival would be hard to find.

On the 23rd of the month I gave my first and only lecture in India on practical agriculture, at the Saidapet Agricultural College—a Government institution. It was a pleasant break into the monotony of perpetual lectures on religious and metaphysical subjects, and aroused my old interest in the great problem of helping the earth to fully nourish mankind. The President of the College presided, and the whole thing went off very nicely. But as this subject properly belongs to the pre-Theosophical portion of my life, it need not be mixed up with the present one, the history of whose chief events we are now tracing.

On the 27th Mr. Leadbeater and I sailed for Colombo to take up a lecturing tour on behalf of the Buddhist National Education Fund that I had promised to make. The sea was smooth, the weather pleasant, the ship's officers old acquaintances of other voyages, and the stretch of 640 miles from port to port was made in due course. On arrival we were met on board ship, at the jetty steps, and at the new quarters of the Colombo Buddhist Theosophical Society, where a hymn of welcome was sung by some of our school children. I found Mr. (now Sir) Edwin Arnold, his wife, and daughter, in town, and at once set to work to organise a fitting public reception to one who had laid the whole Buddhist world under deep obligations by the writing of his *Light of Asia*. But a very few Sinhalese knew this, however, although Sir Edwin was happily ignorant of the fact, and I had to get my intelligent Colombo Buddhist colleagues to go with me to the priests and secure

their co-operation. Fortunately the *Ceylon Observer*, a most abusive and dogmatic paper, made a virulent attack upon him for his sympathy with Buddhism, which made our task a light one. With the High Priest Sumangala we arranged that the reception should be given at his College on the second day thereafter, and fixed just where the priests and visitors should sit on the platform and what the High Priest should say. A copy of the proposed address was given Sir Edwin at his request, and the function duly came off with complete success. My next neighbor on the platform was George Augustus Sala, who chanced to be passing homeward from Australia. When the guests had departed, Mr. Leadbeater and I were asked by the High Priest to address the people, and did so.

The next day we took train for Kalutara with some of our Colombo members, to attend the cremation of Ambagahawatte Indasabha, Nayaka Terunnanse, the learned founder of the Ramanya Nikaya (sect) of Ceylon Buddhism. The occasion was so striking that I think I may as well quote some of its details from an account which I wrote for the *Theosophist* while the circumstances were fresh in my mind.[1]

As it has been more than once explained, the Buddhist sects of Ceylon are not at variance as to dogma, they have the same books and the same beliefs; their distinction from each other is in the several sources of their priestly ordination (*upasampada*), one brotherhood getting it from Siam, the other from Amarapoora, in Burma. Buddhism

[1] See the issue for May, 1886, p. 494.

originally went to those countries from Ceylon, but a series of wars of invasion and conquest, waged by kings of India against the rulers of Ceylon, caused the almost complete extinction of the religion of Buddha in that country. To so low an ebb had it come, that when, finally, a Sinhalese warrior-king drove out the Tamil invaders and recovered his ancestral throne, he could find no worthy monks to conduct public worship and preach the Dhamma. He accordingly sent to the King of Siam for learned bhikkus to come and re-establish the religion, and the best of the Sinhalese candidates were duly ordained. This formed what is known as the Siam Nikaya. The priests, being mainly of high social rank, would not confer ordination upon candidates of lower caste, so the more energetic and learned of these went to the King of Burma and got what they sought from the chief priests. This formed the Amarapoora Nikaya. But in the course of time that happened which always happens in the religious affairs of men : piety relaxed, learning became confined to the minority, idleness and sanctimoniousness prevailed, and now and again a monk who grieved over the decay of true religion would break out in protest, and either start a new sub-sect or withdraw into the jungle for a life of seclusion and meditation. Ambagahawatte was one of these protesting rebels ; he gave up his connection with the Amarapoora Nikaya, went abroad and took a fresh ordination, and founded the Ramanya Nikaya, just before H. P. B. and I came to the Island, if I remember aright. On 23rd June, 1880, he joined the priests' division of what I called the Buddhist

section of the T. S., the other division being that of the laymen who formed our Ceylon Branches. Four days earlier the great leaders of all the other sects and sub-sects—Sumangala, Subhuti, Weligama, Bulatgama, Piyaratana, Potuwila, and Megittuwatte, the silver-tongued orator, *par excellence*, of Ceylon, had preceded him in entering our Society ; and thus were united on our common platform those leaders who had been hitherto divided more or less seriously. Ambagahawatte was learned, ascetic, a great stickler for the minute observance of every detail of rule of conduct prescribed for the Sangha in Vinaya Pitaka. His head was of a highly intellectual type, his eye full of thought and power, his manner gentle and repressed, and his private conduct blameless. We were great friends, for I fully sympathised with his yearning for reformation of the bhikkus and extension of Buddhism throughout the world. Naturally, therefore, I was invited by his followers to attend the cremation of his body at Kalutara, and gladly went to pay the last act of respect to his memory, He had died on January 30th, and his cremation occurred on February 3rd. Meanwhile the body had lain in state at his own monastery, five miles from the town of Kalutara, whence it was borne in procession on a catafalque erected on a decorated car, to the place of cremation. Mr. Leadbeater and I with our Colombo friends saw everything. Before the coffin was removed from the Dharmasala (preaching hall) where it was lying, the assembled priests, to the number of some two hundred, filed thrice in silence around it, faced inward with joined palms raised to the

forehead, knelt, and laid their faces to the ground, as if paying their final homage to their dead chief. The coffin was then raised by the senior disciples, borne outside the house, and laid upon the car. Native musicians then, with booming drum and wailing pipe, thrice circumambulated the bier, the people cast flowers, roasted grains, and sweet waters upon the coffin; the village headmen closed in about the car, gorgeous in gold lace and buttons and towering combs of shell; the yellow-robed friars extended in single file before and behind the car, each with his fan, his cadjan sunshade, and his begging-bowl slung at his back. The line of march was then taken up in a glare of hot sunshine that made vivid the colors of vestments and gold lace, of amber-yellow robes, and of the gaudily bedecked catafalque on wheels. Behind the rear end of the line of bhikkus walked hundreds of men and women bearing the spices, the citronella and sandalwood oils, and other portable materials which they were contributing towards the pyre.

In a grassy basin, bordered at two sides by steep hillocks clothed to the top with forest trees, stood a pyre of logs of mango, cachu, cinnamon, and cocoa-palm, built nine feet square, so as to front the four points of the compass. At each side three heavy posts of about fifteen feet in height were provided to serve as a sort of frame to support the additional fuel that might be brought by friends. Outside all was a quadrangular structure of young areca-palm trees, framed in squares after the native fashion for triumphal arches, and prettily decorated with the split and festooned tender leaves of the cocoanut tree in

the charmingly artistic fashion which comes naturally to the Sinhalese. On the side facing the road was a canvas screen inscribed with the name, titles, and chronological history of Ambagahawatte ; on the east side a larger one painted with emblems ; over the pyre stretched a cloth canopy with a painted sun at the centre and stars at the corners ; and around the cornice of the areca framework fluttered crimson pennons and bannerets. At the distance of fifty yards towards the east, a long arbor of cloths upon bamboo supports awaited the occupancy of the monks coming in the procession. Leadbeater and I, who had pushed on ahead by a cross path, sat in a cool shade looking on. Presently we heard the sad, sobbing wail of the pipes and the roll of the bass and kettle drums and the tom-toms, and the procession came into sight and all took their assigned places. The car was drawn to the pyre, the chief disciples mounted the latter, white cloths were drawn about it as a temporary screen, the coffin was lifted and placed, and then an eloquent, clear-voiced monk recited the Pancha Sila. Response was made by the 5,000 people present in a great volume of sound that produced a most striking effect. The same priest then pronounced an eloquent discourse upon the dead master, and enlarged upon the mysteries of life and death, the working of the law of Karma, and Nirvana as the *summum bonum*. Turning towards me, he then asked me to make some remarks as a friend of Ambagahawatte and President of our Society, which I did. The contributions towards the funeral pile were then brought forward, and the pyre was built up to a height of nearly fifteen

feet, and gallons upon gallons of fragrant oils and gums were scattered over the logs. All being now ready, the disciples removed the cloth screen, descended to the ground, thrice circumambulated the pyre, reciting prescribed Pali verses, called Piritta, thrice knelt and made obeisance, then slowly, with downcast eyes and grief-stricken countenances, stood back. The firing of the pyre in such cases is the privilege of the chief disciple and the brother of the deceased, but these two paid me the unusual compliment of asking me to apply the torch. I, however, declined the honor, as I thought it an intrusion, so the usual course was taken. Presently the great structure was sheeted in curtains of flame, that licked up the wood, the spices, and the oils, and waved long yellow-red streamers towards the clear sky. It was a grand sight: how infinitely nobler than the ceremony of burial, one could see who had the least poetical instinct in him. After a while the huge pyre was a mass of glowing coals, the corpse was reduced to ashes, and the gifted and courageous founder of the Ramanya Nikaya had passed out of the sight of men whose view is limited to the physical plane, and moved on another stage in his evolutionary orbit.

Cremation was the universal custom of sepulture in Ceylon before the Portuguese conquest, save for the most ignoble class. In the case of a laic the pomp of it was proportioned to the wealth and the consequence of the deceased. This we learn from the ancient Pali and Sanskrit writings. But with the new masters came innovations—the result, in part, of bloody persecutions and the necessity for hiding in

the jungle from their savage conquerors. Burial replaced cremation for the laity, until now it is only given to priests and the nobles of the Kandyan districts. Some of the friends of the Sinhalese, myself among them, have urged them to revert to the older and better fashion, and I hope that in time this may be done. No obstacle whatever in the form of ancient custom, social prejudice, or religious prescription stands in the way ; the Sinhalese are just stupidly continuing a bad method of sepulture that their forefathers would have regarded as a terrible disgrace, one which was forced upon them by foreign conquerors who were as bigoted as fanaticism could make them, and as cruel as tigers in dealing with the captives to their sword. It is a curious instance of national auto-hypnotism. Some fine day a few leading men among them will realise that they are doing to the bodies of their deceased relatives just what, in the olden time, the Government would have done to an outcast or criminal—one, in short, who was outside the pale of respectable society and not entitled to better treatment for their carcases than a dog ; and then the spell will be broken, ostentatious burials will be given up, and the bodies of the dead will be put into the bosom of the all-purifying fire, to be reduced to their component elements. The embalming of corpses with spices and natron, and the laying of them away underground to turn into poisonous carrion, are customs begotten of false theological beliefs as to the *post mortem* importance of our mortal shell : cremation, the noblest, most honorable of all forms of sepulture, was the natural outcome of those

higher, grander, and more reasonable concepts about the perishable and imperishable parts of the human Ego, which are taught in Brahmanism and Buddhism.

## CHAPTER XXV

## ESTABLISHING A BUDDHIST FLAG

THE American Consul sent me, on 5th February, a gentleman's visiting-card, which rolled back the panorama of my life, twenty-odd years, to the period of the American War of the Rebellion. It was that of a Mr. Miller, of Sacramento, who had been one of the clerks under me when I was attached to the War Department. A greater contrast between myself as I was then and now could not be imagined; and it was with a feeling of real pleasure that I called on my friend and his wife at their hotel, and, in the exchange of reminiscences about persons and things, the magic of memory brought up in my mind the long-hidden pictures of those awful days when our nation was fighting for its existence, and my hair was turning grey with the load of responsibility which was cast upon me by my official position. The chance of his voyage around the world having brought him to Colombo was grasped by our leading Buddhist to get from Mr. Miller, at first-hand, some details about my public record and private character at home, to serve as weapons of defence against the hostile parties in the Eastern pulpit and Press, who trod as near to the line of actionable slander as they dared, in their

attacks upon our Society and its Founders. A great calamity impended, however, over the head of my friend, for within the next week his wife died at the hotel, and the Consul and I followed her remains to the grave.

It was at this time that our Colombo colleagues had the happy thought of devising a flag which could be adopted by all Buddhist nations as the universal symbol of their faith, thus serving the same purpose as that of the cross does for all Christians. It was a splendid idea, and I saw in a moment its far-reaching potentialities as an agent in that scheme of Buddhistic unity which I have clung to from the beginning of my connection with Buddhism. With the many points of dissemblance between Northern and Southern Buddhism, the work of unification was a formidable one; yet still, in view of the other fundamental features of agreement, the task was not hopeless. My *Buddhist Catechism* was already circulated in Japan in two translations, and now this flag came as a powerful reinforcement. Our Colombo brothers had hit upon the quite original and unique idea of blending in the flag the six colors alleged to have been exhibited in the aura of the Buddha, *viz.*, sapphire-blue, golden-yellow, crimson, white, scarlet, and a hue composed of the others blended.[1] The adoption of this model avoided all possible causes of dispute among Buddhists, as all, without distinction, accept the same tradition as to the Buddha's personal appearance and that of his aura: moreover, the flag would

[1] In Pali the names of the colors are *Nila*, *Pita*, *Lohita*, *Avadata*, *Mangasta*, and *Prabhasvara*.

have no political meaning whatever, but be strictly religious. As the Colombo Committee had sketched the flag, it was of the inconvenient shape of a ship's long, streaming pennant, which would be quite unsuitable for carrying in processions or fixing in rooms. My suggestion that it should be made of the usual shape and size of national flags was adopted, and when we had had a sample made, it was unanimously approved of. Accepted by the chief priests as orthodox, it at once found favor, and, on the Buddha's Birthday of that year, was hoisted on almost every temple and decent dwelling-house in the Island. From Ceylon it has since found its way throughout the Buddhist world. I was much interested to learn, some years later, from the Tibetan Ambassador to the Viceroy, whom I met at Darjeeling, that the colors were the same as those in the flag of the Talai Lama.

The importance of the service thus rendered to the Buddhist nations may perhaps be measured with that of giving, say, to the Christians the Cross symbol, or to the Moslems the Crescent. The Buddhist flag, moreover, is one of the prettiest in the world, the stripes being placed vertically in the order above written, and the sequence of the hues making true chromatic harmonies.

In pursuance of the policy of unity, I held a Convention in Colombo on 14th February (1885) to agree upon a line of action as regards the tour I had come to make in the interests of education and religion. Sumangala, Megittuwatte, and personal representatives of Wimelasara and Ambagahawatte were present, and we were able to

come to a perfectly unanimous conclusion. Waskaduwe Subhuti, who was unavoidably absent, called on me the next day, and was, as usual, extravagantly liberal in promises and compliments.

On the 20th, in company with Messrs. Leadbeater, W. d'Abrew, Dharmapala, and my veteran Buddhist servant "Bob," I started in my travelling-cart for Negombo. But man proposes and God disposes, it is said, and I had my first and only serious attack of malarial fever since coming to the East. I could only lecture once, when we retraced our steps, and during the next fortnight Leadbeater had to do my work, while I lay abed and drank nasty herbal decoctions given me by a native doctor, that were enough to make a horse sick. I was out again on 5th March and took the platform at a place called Ratmalana. The tour in the Negombo district was resumed, and we visited the stations on our list, whose names may be judged from these few specimens: Pamankada, Hunupitiya, Naranpitiya, Wilawalla, Mokallangamuwa—which I commend to the managers of American "spelling bees" as good practice.

Returning from one of these outstations to Colombo, we held a bumper meeting at the Colombo Society's Headquarters, and broached the scheme of placing small earthen collecting-pots at private houses, into which the family and their friends should drop as many coppers as they felt they could afford in aid of the Buddhist National Fund. The packed audience responded fervently to Leadbeater's and my appeals, and fifty names were given in by persons who were willing to take pots. Our zealous brothers of the

Colombo Society, accordingly, had a number of these money-pots made at a pottery, and, putting them into a cart, went through the streets of Colombo and distributed them. They would stop from time to time, call the neighbors around, make them a stirring address, and give pots to all who asked for them. Within the next twelvemonth a sum of about Rs. 1,000 was thus collected, if my memory serves me.

The cocoanut palm has been the theme of hundreds of poets, for it is one of the most beautiful objects of the vegetable kingdom. But to see it as we saw it on the night of 23rd March, at Ooloombalana, on the estate of Messrs. Pedalis de Silva and R. A. Mirando, was to take into the memory a picture that could never fade. The stars shone silvery in the azure sky, and in the extensive cocoanut grove many bonfires had been built to protect the fruit from the depredations of thieves. The effect of these lights upon the enamelled surfaces of the huge fronds was marvellously artistic. Their lower surfaces were brought out into high relief, and, standing at the foot of a tree and looking upward, one could see the great circle of star-studded sky that was opened out by the outspringing foot-stalks, while, as the wind shook the fronds, their spiky points would wave up and down and bend sidewise and back again, so that the hard, smooth, emerald-hued upper surfaces would glint and sparkle in the yellow glare of the fires. It was one of the most entrancing pictures I ever saw in my life. Our pitched cart with its white tent-top, the white oxen, our camp-fire, and our group of persons, were vividly lighted up, and I could not but

fancy what an exquisite painting Salvator Rosa would have made of the quiet scene.

We entered the village of Madampe with a great procession that had come to meet us, and made noise enough with their barbaric tom-toms and horns to frighten away all the *pisāchas* within the circuit of five miles. Of course, our public lecture was attended by a huge crowd, who displayed much enthusiasm. Leadbeater, who is now working in America, will doubtless be entertained by these notes of our associated tourings. I doubt, however, his recalling with pleasure the trip from Madampe to Mahavena, in a country cart without springs, over a fearfully rough road, on which we got, as Horace Greeley did over a Kansas railroad, more exercise to the mile than was good for the soul. Every bone in our bodies was shaken up so as to make us painfully conscious of its anatomical position, while, as for poor Leadbeater, he suffered agony with his weak back. However, we came out of the experience alive, and that was something.

At one village, which I shall not name, we found the Buddhists killers of animals for food and drinkers and vendors of arrack—a pretty mess indeed—quite after the Indian Christian model. Well, it may be safely said that I walked into them in my discourse, citing the Silas to show what a real Buddhist should be, and pointing to what they were. The very headman whose hospitality was offered us was an arrack-renter, and fish-catching and selling was the order of the day. In defining Nirvana and the Path towards it, I gave them one and all to understand,

on the authority of Lord Buddha Himself, that if they imagined that they could get to Nirvana with a jug of arrack in one hand and a string of fish in the other, they were mightily mistaken: they had better go over to the Christians at once if they believed that, for fishing and arrack-drinking put a man quite outside the pale of Buddhism!

On 7th April we closed the tour and started back for Colombo, but in the night our driver, having fallen asleep, dropped from his seat, and the bulls drew the heavy cart over his foot, so my servant "Bob," who was up to any emergency, took his place and brought us at 3 a.m. to the house of our good friend Hendrik Aracchi, where we stopped until 9 o'clock the next morning and then proceeded on towards home. We got to the Headquarters at 3 p.m., and I went at once to my desk to deal with arrears of work.

Sunday, 11th April, being the Sinhalese New Year's Day, Leadbeater and I and others went to Kelanie temple, a very sacred shrine, a few miles from Colombo, to offer flowers and address the multitude. It was an animated scene indeed, what with the crowds of worshippers, the flower offerings before the images of Lord Buddha, the babel of chattering voices, the drawling intonations of the Five Precepts by the priests, and the full roar of repetitions by the people, the thousands of little lamps alight around the Bo trees, dagobas, and buildings, and the general stir and bustle. Buddhist "worship" is simplicity itself. The pilgrim, carrying flowers of the lotus, lily, champak, and other sweet-smelling

plants and trees, doffs his sandals at the threshold of the house of statues, holds his joined palms to his forehead, lays the flowers on a marble slab before the image, bends his body reverentially, pronounces a phrase or two of the sacred teachings, and then quietly retires to give place to the next comer. That is all, and what could be simpler or more unobjectionable ? The image is not worshipped ; the devotee offers his fragrant blooms to the ideal of the world-savior, Gautama Buddha, whom he professes to follow in the Eightfold Path (*Aryastanga Marga*) which He traced out for all men, and whom he holds enshrined in his heart of hearts. The Buddhist monk is no mediator, his prayers can do nobody good save himself, and then only as practically worked into his daily life, thought, and conversation. The Tathâgata was a man who, through countless rebirths, had at last reached the goal of Wisdom and Divine Powers, and who had preached the doctrine that Nirvana was attainable by all men who would profit by His discoveries and walk in the path of good and wise men. No infallibility had He claimed, no dogma enforced on assumed authority of divine inspiration. He had taught in the *Kalama Sutta*, on the contrary, as I have above noted, that one should believe nothing taught by a sage, written in a book, handed down by tradition, or supposedly proved by analogy, unless the thing taught was supported by human experience. Full of compassion for all beings, moved to heartbreaking by the volume of human woe, He had voluntarily taken rebirth after rebirth to learn more and more, develop more and more His

insight, and gradually fit Himself to be the Leader of ignorant mankind out of the quagmire of Ignorance on to the firm ground of Truth. One has only to mix with such a crowd as we saw at Kelanie to realise how deep is the devotion and love for the Buddha in the hearts of His followers of to-day; ignorant, and petty, and backward in civilisation as they may be.

The next important public work that I had to take up was the reorganisation, on a stronger basis, of the Buddhist Defence Committee, a body which—as may be remembered—we formed in 1884, when I was leaving for London, to represent certain grievances of the Ceylon Buddhists to Lord Derby, the Colonial Secretary. The results of the Colombo Riots of that year, when a peaceable Buddhist procession was murderously attacked by Roman Catholics, showed the necessity for some permanent committee which should be the channel through which the community might transmit their petitions to Government and secure redress for grievances. Until then, the Sinhalese had had no organisation of a national character, and, consequently, no semblance of public opinion that carried any weight. To the Theosophical Society is due the state of affairs now prevalent, *viz.*, a Committee of Defence and a popular newspaper, circulating throughout the Island and even reaching those who live in the most distant countries as merchants, servants, or in other bread-winning capacities. The remodelled Committee, formed on 18th April, 1885, had the High Priest Sumangala as Honorary President and the most influential laics as active

members. I was elected an Honorary Member, and have had frequent occasion to assist with counsel and otherwise my co-religionists. The remaining few days of my stay in the Island were taken up with business in Colombo, and on the 26th I sailed for Madras on the "Chindwara," on board which comfortable ship I found in the Captain and other officers old "shipmates" of former voyages in Indian waters. During the tour I lectured thirty-two, and Leadbeater twenty-nine, times; tours were made among the villages of the Western and North-Western Provinces; several hundred rupees were collected for the National Fund; a new Sinhalese edition of 5,000 copies of the *Buddhist Catechism* and 2,000 of Mr. Leadbeater's *Sisya Bodhya*, or elementary Catechism, were published; the accounts of the Colombo Buddhist Theosophical Society, and of our Vernacular paper, the *Sandaresa*, were overhauled and audited; subscriptions amounting to Rs. 3,000 were collected towards the cost of Headquarters' buildings; the Defence Committee was permanently organised; and, last but not least, the Buddhist Flag was devised, improved, and adopted. A fair show of work, one would say. I returned alone, as it was arranged that Mr. Leadbeater should stay as my local representative and take the general supervision of Buddhist (secular) affairs.

I found all well on reaching home on 5th May, and dropped at once into work. T. Subba Row came to see me on the next day, and we had a long talk about H. P. B. and the project of her return to India. For some reason his feelings towards her had entirely changed; he was now positively inimical, and

protested that she should not be recalled for another year or two, so as to give time for the public animosity to subside, and avoid the scandal that would be caused by the Missionaries setting on again the Coulombs to sue her for libel. His views were shared by only a few of our members, however, the great majority inclining towards her return as soon as her health should be sufficiently restored to permit it. Subba Row came again a few days later, bringing with him a letter from one of our Indian members, in which was found, on opening it, a postscript in blue pencil, in the K. H. handwriting.

After showing me it, he re-mailed it to his correspondent, asking him if the blue writing was in the letter before it left him. His reply came in due course and—to me at least—was unsatisfactory. At about this time some man in Northern India was advertising widely in the papers that he had been allowed to photograph Mahatma K. H. in the Tibetan Borderland, and that he would sell copies at two rupees each. Of course, we knew that it must be an impudent swindle and did not send for a copy, but one was sent me by a friend, and it was far worse than even we had expected. Instead of the Master's Christlike face, this was the picture of a brutalised Dugpa lama, with his paraphernalia of human leg-bone pipe, drinking-cup made of a skull, coarse red dress, peaked red cap, and heavy rosaries. It was like a personal insult to me, who had seen the real Personage face to face, talked with him, and seen the spiritual radiance which lights up the countenances of the Wise Ones. No doubt the scoundrelly speculator

made a good thing of his photograph, and much good may the money have done him.

On the 24th several of us attended the wedding of one of our younger Madrassi members, Mr. Ramanjulu Naidu, and were much amused by the performances of a buffoon, who, with a simple bit of betel-leaf held by his two hands to his lips, imitated the singing and whistling of various birds, and, by breathing through his nose, the sounds of brass and stringed instruments. He also caricatured cleverly a missionary trying to preach in Tamil, a European scolding his servant, and some types of Hindu character that one meets from time to time in social intercourse.

A most sad case of the suicide of a young lad, the son of beloved European friends of ours, was reported to me in this month. He was only about twelve or fourteen years of age, had a happy and luxurious home, and parents who loved him dearly ; his father was in a position to ensure him just such a career in life as he might have preferred. But suddenly, without provocation, he shot himself dead in his own room. This was not all ; his brother had done the same, at about the same age, in the same house, a year or two before. The two events seem to have been related, and it is an interesting problem what peculiar Karma could have made it necessary that these two bright, affectionate lads should have taken their own lives at the same age, and thus have wrenched with a double agony the hearts of their noble parents. Can anyone imagine my happiness in hearing from the dear mother that, but for the support and consolation of Theosophy, she should in

all probability have gone mad ? The complete realisation of the truth of the theory of Karma dried her unavailing tears and calmed her affrighted soul. How admirably has Mr. Fullerton stated the case for the beneficent and consolatory working out of karmic results, in his pamphlet, *Theosophy in Practice, and Consolations of Theosophy.* If these parents suffered, it was no accident, no " mysterious Providence " that caused it, but they themselves : of what they had sown long before, they now reaped the harvest.

" The father, in some past time, when himself a father, had made life bitter to his children, or had been unsympathetic to those dependent on him, and had then formed a record which had to be expiated later on. Then the conditions were reversed, and the iron which he had driven into the souls of the helpless is now driven into his own. The pain is hard to bear, yet he knows that thus only can atonement be made, the debt to Justice be wiped out, the future freed from anxiety and sorrow. And so he becomes reconciled to an expiation which is reassuring, and is consoled at the thought that he has but brought upon himself what he deserved, etc."

This would explain why these two entities, self-doomed by self-generated Karmas to suicide in boyhood, had drifted into this particular family circle to take birth. The antecedent karmic tie between them brought it about that one should first rush into Kamaloka, and then hypnotically draw his companion culprit along the same dark path. As for the present mother of them, if there was ever a woman and mother more lovable, I have never seen her. But

that she had done something in a past life to draw upon herself the suffering resulting from such a tragedy is plain enough, if we live in a world of balanced cause and effect, and are not the sport of devils and astral tramps.

In an earlier chapter I have noted a peculiar case of family Karma that came under my notice in Northern India. Two sons of a respectable and healthy family had each been stricken with paralysis on attaining his twelfth year. When I saw them, one was fourteen, the other twelve years old; and although I had cured some two hundred paralytics by my curative passes, I could do nothing for these poor lads: evidently it was their Karma to suffer in this way, and their cases were incurable.

The book of Adolphe d'Assier on the state of man after death [1] pleased me so much that I asked and, in due course, obtained his permission to bring out an English edition with annotations of my own. I began the task on 27th May (1886), and, with intervals of other duties attended to, finished it on June 24th. It was published in a neat form by Mr. Redway, and had a gratifying success. To my mind, it is one of the most useful books of reference in our occult literature, especially so because of the author's having been a Comtist, and having led us, as it were, past the tomb, into the shadowland. That he deserts us midway through the gloom, matters not: he has at least disposed of the objectors in his old party who refused to stir one step beyond the sill of the door of the sepulchre.

[1] *L'Humanité Posthume*

On 6th June the Council met and approved of my plan for the organisation of an American Board of Control to have charge of our movement in the United States of America. Shortly after, however, a quarrel sprang up between Mr. Judge and Dr. Coues, the latter wanting to be appointed President for life of the American Section—an anomaly, since a Society can have but one head if it be really an entity, or corporate body. He wrote H. P. B. and myself the most fantastical, self-adulatory letters, in which gross flattery was mingled with boasting and peppered with covert threats. He explained to us how he played upon the American public, now exciting its curiosity and wonder, anon destroying its hopes of ever solving the mystery which he was hiding from the profane. In short, he gave me the impression that he was a most dangerous and undesirable man to have dealings with; and when he had brought things to a certain point, I got the Council to agree to dissolve the American Board of Control and replace it by a sectional form of organisation, based on purely republican lines, and having in itself the elements of stability. How well the scheme worked, under Mr. Judge's direction, is now a matter of history. Dr. Coues was ultimately expelled from our membership.

A letter came to me from Bombay, from Tookaram Tatya, which gave us all a great surprise. On the first page he writes feelingly about the disappearance of Damodar and of our not knowing whether he was dead or alive. On the second page, left blank, I found a long message from Mahatma K. H., or at any rate in his familiar script, giving me full information

in answer to Tookaram's plaint. Damodar, it said, was alive and safe ; he had tried to pass through a terrible ordeal of initiation, but had failed through physical weakness ; he would, however, ultimately succeed. The time had come for us all to realise that there was an inexorable law of Karma and act accordingly. The tone of the message was admirable, and I felt rejoiced to see its stern reminder of our personal accountability : it seemed the harbinger of better days, the knell of sham holiness, of which there had been too much. I re-posted the letter to Tookaram, and asked what he knew about it, as Subba Row had in the previous instance. He answered in a letter, received on the 17th of that month, expressing his great joy over the occurrence, and telling me how other leading men of ours shared his feelings. As H. P. B. was in Europe and Damodar in Tibet, this phenomenon could not be attributed to them by even their most dishonest critics.

The news from Europe was now cheering. At the head of our movement in France we had a gifted and extremely able man, M. Louis Dramard, who, most unfortunately for us, went into a rapid consumption a little later, and died just when a field for unlimited usefulness was opening before him. Had he lived, we should have had, within the next five years, a very large following among the higher class of French Socialists, of whom Bernard Malon and Dramard, pure altruists, were types. Even as it is, we have members in the National Assembly—or had, at all events, three years ago, when I was last in

Paris. The fact is, this pollen of Theosophy has been wafted all over the world, and fructified thought-seeds in thousands of brains that the world does not suspect of such affinities. When Tennyson died, a copy of *The Voice of the Silence* lay by his bedside on the night-table, and more than one royal personage has our books on the shelves of his private library. And why not? Thoughts are things, and great thoughts more potent than the most absolute monarch on earth: before their majesty even he has to bow in reverence. Cry out, then, O warders on the walls of our citadel! for the wind will waft your call to the ears of those whose clairaudient sense is waiting to hear it, and whose hour of Karma has struck.

A letter from H. P. B., about the writing of *The Secret Doctrine*, that I have just come across, is so suggestive that I shall use it in this place. She says:

"Sinnett has left, after stopping with me three weeks, and Mrs. . . . remains for ten days more. She is very kind, and copies for me *The Secret Doctrine*. The enormous (volume) of Introductory Stanzas, the first chapter on the Archaic Period and Cosmogony, with numberless appendices, is ready; but how to send it to Adyar? Suppose it is lost! I do not remember one word of it, and so we would be cooked! Well, old boy, Z. has read it through twice and begun again for the third time. He has *not found one part to be corrected* in the English, and he is amazed, he says, at the 'gigantic erudition and the soundness of reasoning in its showing of the esotericism of the Bible and its incessant parallels with the Vedas,

Brahmanas, etc.' This is a little more wonderful yet than *Isis*. Then you corrected, and Wilder suggested. *Now, I am absolutely alone*, with my arm-chair and inkstand before me, and no books to speak of. I wrote a whole section and the interpretation of a whole stanza (about 40 pages), without any books around me, and without stopping, for about four hours, simply listening. This is no humbug, old boy, anyhow."

Now for a coincidence. As I write, among the exchanges laid on my table is the copy of *The Banner of Light* for February 25th (1899), in which appears an article entitled, "Was Talmage Inspired?" and apparently from the pen of the editor. It says:

"Many of our readers will remember a poem published some months ago in *The Banner*, entitled, 'The Stage of Life,' by Madge York. This poem was received, laboriously spelled out word by word, on the Ouija board, by a gentleman, who, though not widely known in spiritualistic circles, has been singularly blessed in his own medial powers. A year ago last summer the editor was informed by this gentleman that he had received another most remarkable communication on the Ouija board, of many pages in length, concerning occupations in spirit-life. He and a friend sat several evenings to receive it, one transferring the words to paper, and the other furnishing the power with which the intelligence guided the pointer to the letters. Oftentimes a word was spelled over and over again in order that there might be no mistake. Being

uncertain regarding many historical characters referred to, the gentleman sat up nearly the whole of one night verifying by the encyclopædia names and statements given. In every instance he found them absolutely correct.

"While the communication was received in response to queries and a personal desire for knowledge, he yet felt that the information was given for the benefit of others as well as himself, and fully intended sometime to share it with the world. He hesitated to do so because of the assurance that the message was not quite completed. In the meantime he read it to many friends. About a year and a half ago he took it to a typewriter in New York and had it copied. Lawyers, merchants, and prominent business men read the document, or heard it read, and speculated as to its source.

"We now come to the strange part of our narrative. On January 22, 1899, Rev. T. De Witt Talmage delivered from his pulpit in Washington, D.C., a sermon entitled, 'What Are Our Departed Friends Doing Now?' taking his text from Ezekiel i: 'Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened.'

"This sermon was reported by the Washington *Post*, copied by *The Progressive Thinker* last week, and will appear in the next issue of *The Banner of Light*. Excepting the introduction, certain other embellishments, and an orthodox coloring given by the brain through which it passed, the sermon is identical with the communication received on the Ouija board two

years previously by our friend. Whole paragraphs are the same, without the variation of a word.

"From whence came the inspiration? The gentleman tells us he did not request the name of the intelligence who gave him such rich spiritual food. He does not care to have his name published at present, but he will communicate by letter with any who wish to verify the above, and will furnish them with the names and addresses of the typewriter and others who will cheerfully testify."

Every experienced occultist who reads this must see the bearing the case has upon the whole question of H. P. B.'s alleged plagiarisms. In the most merciless and savage manner her books have been dissected by her evil-wishers, and on the strength of their containing a large number of citations from other authors without giving credit, she has been charged with wilful and dishonorable plagiarism. Some of these traducers have, themselves, been Spiritualists of many years' experience with mediums and their phenomena, who ought, therefore, to have known that we have not yet learnt the secret of thought-currents on the several planes of mentality. Not one of them is able to explain the simultaneous or almost simultaneous discovery of scientific truths by students far removed from each other and not in mutual communication, or the putting of the same ideas into books issued at about the same time in different parts of the world.[1] Presumably, not one

[1] Just while I am writing, the current issue of the *Bombay Gazette* publishes the following paragraph:

of H. P. B.'s cruel critics would venture to say that Mr. Talmage had plagiarised his sermon from an unpublished mediumistic message two years after it was received by the medium, read by his friends, and, so far as appears, never brought to Mr. Talmage's notice. If, therefore, he is to be given the benefit of the doubt, why should less kindness be used in the case of H. P. B. ? One can see, from the instance under notice, that H. P. B. may not have been guilty of a single conscious plagiarism in the writing of either of her greater books, but that she may have spiritually drawn them direct, or received them at second hand spiritually, from that great storehouse of human thought and mental products, the Astral Light, where, as drops are merged in the ocean, personal begetters of thought are lost in the totality of the Infinite Mind, save to those most advanced Intelligences who can count the sand-grains and the ocean-drops and pick out the atoms in their respective

"It is a singular fact (says a correspondent) that at the time of the publication of Kipling's first 'Jungle Book,' Mr. Fred. Whishaw actually had a Jungle Book of his own ready for publication. The coincidence was complete, for Mr. Whishaw had used the names of animals and animal expressions in much the same manner as Kipling had done. Suddenly the latter's 'Jungle Book' was announced, and albeit this incident happened several years ago, Mr. Whishaw cannot be persuaded to place his own work upon the market. It is among the most singular of literary coincidences. He has the manuscript still."

Which plagiarised from the other? Again: In 1842 Dr. J. R. Buchanan, then of Louisville, Ky. and Mr. J. B. W. S. Gardner, of Roche Court, Hants, England, acting independently of one another, announced their discovery of the power to suspend or excite cerebral organs by mesmeric action. Which plagiarised!

vortices. In her letter to me H. P. B. cites the fact of Mr. Z, having sat with her for hours while she was transcribing what was spoken to her clairaudient sense by a Master, invisible to him but seen by herself. The reader will find in the second volume of this Series (p. 466) my description of her method of writing from the dictation of an invisible Teacher as I myself saw it at Ootacamund. This very same thing I saw unnumbered times while she was writing *Isis Unveiled*: I have described it exactly as it occurred,[1] and quoted her own description of the process in a letter to her sister; it agrees perfectly with what she writes me as having occurred at Ostende. Shall we call this phenomenon plagiarism, then, or shall we not modestly confess our ignorance of that most awe-inspiring fact of the transmission of thought-vibrations from man to man physical, man to man spiritual, and man spiritual to man physical; its laws, its limitations, and its potentialities?

[1] Cf. OLD DIARY LEAVES, vol. i, p. 242.

## CHAPTER XXVI

## FOUNDING THE ADYAR LIBRARY

It had been originally intended to erect a separate kiosk to contain the pictures of the two Mahatma patrons painted by Schmiechen, but as the building of the Library and Convention Hall proceeded, it became evident that it would be better in every way to house them in a special annex to the Library, which was done. The superbly carved screen which H. P. B. had had made to go in her own big room, was of just the right size to serve as a partition in the arch between the Library and Picture Room, and was finished in due course and set up in its place. The black and white marble flooring-tiles which were in the verandahs when we bought the property, were now taken up and utilised for paving the Library and its approach, while new tiles were presented by Mr. C. Ramiah, of Madras, for the floor of the Picture Annex. Building operations were being pushed as energetically as possible, under the professional superintendence of the good Mr. C. Sambiah ; our aim being to have everything finished in time for the next Convention. The want of money hampered us greatly, but somehow it all came out right in the long run, as it always does.

On 17th May I left for the lovely hill station of Bangalore, at the invitation of a number of influential men, to come and lecture and form a Branch of the Society. A century ago the Battle of Seringapatam crushed the power of Tippoo Sultan, the warlike ruler of Mysore, and under the protection of the British brought the old Hindu dynasty to the throne. Since then the affairs of this State have been so well administered that it has been made one of the most prosperous and progressive in the Empire. Its advancement, within the past fifteen years especially, under the management of Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, the Dewan (Prime Minister), has been astounding; its wealth increasing by leaps and bounds, its taxation lightened, its mineral resources opened up, and its education policy for both sexes made a model to copy after. When it is stated that the Dewan has been an avowed member of our Society since the time of the visit I am now mentioning, it will be seen that we have reason for a just pride in seeing how the welfare of a people is promoted under the rule of a statesman who practises Theosophical principles.[1]

I was received on arrival at Bangalore by a large number of people, who escorted me to a fine house in the Cantonment, where the customary address was read and then handed to me in a carved sandalwood box, having inside the cover a silver plate appropriately inscribed.

Drives through the wide tree-bordered avenues to points of interest, visits to important personages, receipts of their return visits, private and public

[1] This eminent man has died subsequently.

discussions on philosophy, metaphysics, and science, filled in the time between my hours of reception and made the visit a charming one throughout. On the day after my arrival I had a two-hours' talk with the Dewan upon Yoga, Advaita, and Theosophy, and found him one of the most enlightened and attractive men I had ever met. He consented to take the chair at my first lecture on the 20th. It was given at the Central College, in a great pillared hall with galleries, which was packed to overflowing. A crowd equally as large stood outside the building. The subject given me was "Theosophy and the T.S.," and certainly I never faced a more enthusiastic assemblage. The Dewan's remarks went right to the point, and were both lucid and benevolent. One result of the meeting was to send me a stream of visitors the next day and to cause thirteen persons to enter the Society. Nine more offered themselves the next day, and on the third day there were twenty-eight names on the roll. My second lecture was on "Brahma Vidya," and the audience was a large one, although, to prevent such an uncomfortable crowding as before, the Committee sold tickets of admission. The next evening there was a lecture on "Mesmerism," with experimental demonstrations for the instruction of the new members only; and earlier in the day one to school-boys, of whom hundreds were present.

Bangalore City spreads over a large area, and is divided into two parts—the Cantonment, where Europeans and the highest officials live; and the City proper, the more ancient quarter. My third lecture was given there, upon the distinctly Hindu subject of

"Vayuloka and Its Inhabitants," the term being almost the equivalent of the Purgatory of the Roman Catholics. The popular beliefs in India about this post-sepulchral state of existence are very interesting and, on the whole, identical. The student of this branch of folklore and occultism will profit much by reading D'Assier's excellent work on the state of man after death.[1] At the time of my Bangalore visit I was engaged in compiling information about Vayuloka, and some of the matter in my lecture had been obtained from two Mysorean gentlemen of the place. The natural term of the soul's sojourn in this purgatorial region, this half-way house between earth and Swarga, people greatly differ about : in Mysore they fix it at from ten to sixteen days, and the ceremony of Shraddha takes place only after that. Soldiers killed in battle pass on at once to Swarga—a belief singularly like that of the Scandinavians and other ancient nations of Europe ; but their rulers have to pay a heavy karmic penalty if their cause was not just. Suicides and the victims of accident have to linger in Vayuloka as many years as they would have lingered on earth had they lived out their natural life-terms. The Mysoreans say that after the Vayuloka, the transitive state, come Naraka and Swarga—hell and heaven—and the soul cut adrift from its earth-anchorge, so to express it, is drawn to the one or the other state according to the preponderating attractions which it has created in itself. After it has exhausted all the effects of the Karma of its last

[1] *Posthumous Humanity*, English Trans., London, 1887, George Redway.

preceding incarnation it comes again into earth-life, obedient to its unexhausted *trishna* ; and so the wheel of birth and death keeps on revolving, ever revolving, until the extinction of desire gives release. I am giving here an outline of the popular belief in this hilly state and, to a great extent, among primitive people, as it was told me during the delightful visit I am now describing.

At the house of Sir K. Seshadri Iyer, the Dewan, I was having a most interesting talk about Vedanta with him and his Guru, a venerable and learned Brahman pandit, when the harmonious spiritual atmosphere that we were engendering about us was suddenly thrown into turbulence and confusion by an inrush of the aura of political cunning and selfishness in the person of the late Sir T. Madhava Row, K.C S.I., ex-Dewan of Baroda. The whole life of this gifted statesman had been devoted to worldly affairs, and what he liked best was to realise the schemes for increase of wealth, industrial progress, and mental shrewdness, which his fertile brain planned, and which he did his best to put into operation within the several States of which he had been Prime Minister, *viz.*, Travancore, Indore, Baroda. His model was the British administrative policy, and his success had always been remarkable : at London, as at Simla, Bombay, and Madras, he was *persona grata*. A man like this would not be expected to care for the philosophical and metaphysical excursions along the higher levels of Indian thought, and so, when he joined our little party in the Dewan's drawing-room, Advaita flew out of the

window when Mr. World-wisdom came in by the door. To say that we were satisfied would not be true, we were quite the contrary, but there was nothing for us but to let him lead the conversation along his own "practical" level. Now, whether because of my boldness in uttering heterodox and unworldly opinions, or because my experience in the management of public affairs at home had taught me how to meet such minds as his, I can't say, but the fact is that I had no better friend in India in a certain way than Sir T. Madhava Row, wide apart as we were on religious points. Shortly before his death he organised a public subscription to get my bust modelled by Mr. Havell, Director of the Madras School of Arts—a pretty good sign of his friendly regard. But on the occasion under notice he—as my Diary records—disputed with me in favor of giving Hindus what he called "a belly education," and drawing them away from their ancestral philosophies which, he contended, had only reduced them to political national subjection. Poor man! he died rich but scarcely happy, I fear, for he once offered Mme. Blavatsky to give the Society Rs. 100,000 and devote the rest of his life to its work if she would "show him some miracles going to prove the existence and survival of the soul". How many, alas! are ready to barter wealth for spiritual knowledge, if it can be conveyed to them without interfering with their business engagements.

Lectures, nightly, to an ever-increasing group of new members, at my lodgings and publicly on general subjects, together with visits and drives, took up all my time. I was interested much in a

lecture, given by special request, of the "Queen's Own Sappers and Miners," in the schoolroom of their battalion, this being my first experience of an address to an exclusively military audience. I was most kindly received and treated by the Committee throughout, and, of course, garlanded on leaving.

The Dewan of Mysore joined our Society on 1st August, as many of his principal colleagues had previously done, and I was able to form two large Branches in the city and the cantonment before returning to Madras, after farewell addresses from Committees of both, on my departure—at 7 p.m. on 1st August. This visit was one of the pleasantest I ever made, and after the lapse of thirteen years I am happy to say the friendships then formed are still alive.

I got to Adyar on my birthday (August 2), and spent its hours, as usual, at my desk until far into the night.

When H. P. B. left us for Europe, she particularly requested me to shift over my own quarters in the Riverside bungalow to her new room which Coulomb had built for her in 1884, while we were abroad and he and his *cara sposa* were still in charge of the housekeeping. I did so, but when the rainy season came there was not a spot in the chamber where I could keep my bed dry, the terraced roof leaking like a sieve. So I had to tear down and rebuild, and while I was about it, I extended the northern end and opened windows at the east and west sides, so as to give H. P. B. a chance for currents of air and pretty views of the river when she should come back

to her beloved Indian home. Poor thing! she never had the chance to enjoy it again, and so I am sleeping in the room where she lay twice dying in 1885, with some of her own furniture, pictures, and knick-knacks about me as perpetual reminders of her dear old self. As usual, she mixed up the Society's practical business when she put her finger into the pie. The Overland mail of August 12th brought me the consoling news that (of course without the shadow of constitutional authority) she had cabled our people in New York to dissolve the American Board of Control—to pacify Coues, I presume—and she also offered to turn over her share of the *Theosophist* to Judge and make him her successor (one of two or three dozens). What a pity that one cannot collect into one letter-file the many similar offers she made to men and women from first to last! To offer anyone the successorship was as liberal and practical as to offer him a farm in the moon, for she never could have a real successor, for the excellent reason that nobody was ever likely to be born just like her and so fill her place. At the same time the case of Mrs. Besant has proved that it is possible for another to create as commanding a place as hers was, and to do as much as she to spread Theosophy throughout the world. Still, "there is one glory of the Sun and another glory of the Moon, and another glory of the stars," and so, while there can be no more than one H. P. B. Sun nor one Annie Besant Moon, there are places in our sky for hosts of stars, which certainly differ from each other in glory. If Judge had only realised that!

Work tumbled in upon me on my return, as Oakley went away for a change and recuperation, and I had to take over the whole editorial work.

Among the clever Hindus whose languid patriotism had been stirred up by contact with us was the late R. Sivasankara Pandiyaji, an assistant teacher in Pachiappah's College. He was an eloquent and intense man, with a clarion voice and the capacity for great enthusiasm, so that, when he turned his nervous force into the channel of work, he moved with power. He founded the Hindu Theological High School at Madras, and gathered into it hundreds of boys. His leisure was employed in compiling readers, tracts, and leaflets, full of high moral teachings culled from the Hindu Scriptures, and he trained a number of children of both sexes to recite Sanskrit slokas in a charming manner. His lectures and their recitations at several of our annual gatherings are remembered with pleasure. His first exhibition of the children to me was made at the time above specified.

The growth of the library making it expedient that the Oriental and Western books should be kept separate, I fitted up H. P. B.'s first bedroom at Adyar —the large one upstairs where many recorded phenomena occurred—as the Western Section, and we moved the books into it in September, put in a huge table, and utilised the place for Council meetings as well. As fate would have it, the room could only be got ready by the 7th of the month, despite my desperate attempts to hurry on the carpenters; so, when I was struck by the coincidence, I myself carried in *Isis Unveiled* as the first book and

put it on its shelf. H. P. B., as the readers of Mr. Sinnett's *Incidents* may recollect, being born in the seventh month of the year, went by the name of *Sedmitchka*, she who is connected with the number Seven. Moreover, she was married on 7th July (1848), reached America on 7th July (1873), and died in the seventh month of the seventeenth year of our Theosophical collaboration ; and when it is seen that the number seven has played and is playing a similar important part in the history of my own life, we find ourselves in a pretty tangle of fateful numerical relationships.

We saw a good deal of T. Subba Row at Headquarters at this period, and enjoyed many opportunities to profit by his instructive occult teachings. I have a Diary note to the effect that he told us that fully "one-third of his life is passed in a world of which his own mother has no idea". How few parents do know what are the nightly occupations of the entities to whom they have furnished the present facility for reincarnation ! And how few of the entities themselves bring back recollections of those transcorporeal activities !

## CHAPTER XXVII

## THE OPENING CEREMONY

THERE was much building to do in 1886, and the sound of the hammer and trowel was heard almost throughout the year. Besides the rebuilding of H.P.B.'s bedroom upstairs, which M. Coulomb had made as rain-proof as a sieve, and the conversion of her first large bedroom into a library for Western literature, we had the work of building the Oriental library to push on with great despatch, so as to have it ready for opening during the Convention. To avoid the encroachment of pillars on our limited floor-space, we had ordered steel girders out from England, and when they were fixed in place, suffered a spasm of anxiety on finding that the weight of the brick terrace caused a deflection of $\frac{5}{8}$ in. The span of 27 ft. was a long one, and, in our inexperience, we feared that the terrace might come down by the run some day and perhaps kill somebody, or, what was almost worse, crush the priceless portraits of the Masters into ruin. I think either of us would have consented to death rather than that. But the girders sank to their bearings at last, and the work was hurried on as fast as we could push it. By the end of September,

seeing that the library would certainly be ready in time, a circular was sent around inviting learned men to contribute poems in Sanskrit, Pali, and Zend for the occasion, and asking our colleagues throughout India and Ceylon to arrange for the priests of their several ancient religions to come and take part in the opening ceremonies, which I meant to be of a character to show the eclectic attitude of the Society towards the various religions of the world. In the literary department there was plenty to do, the editing of the *Theosophist* being supplemented with the preparation of a handy monograph on *Psychometry and Thought-Transference*, cataloguing the Western library books, preparing a new edition of the *Buddhist Catechism*, and other things. Besides which there were lectures to give.

We were all rejoiced by the arrival, on 3rd October, on a visit, of Prince Harisinhji and his family, for, as my readers know, he has always been beloved at Headquarters for his sweet character and loyal friendliness. He has worn as well as any man who has joined us from the beginning. Among Indian princes he is the best as man and friend whom I have met, and if all were like him, religion would be on a far better footing in India than it is in these degenerate days. He stopped with us four weeks, occupying the Riverside bungalow and having his meals prepared by his own servants.

Just before the Prince left Adyar, his sweet wife, the worthy type of the noble Rajput race, gave us a considerable sum of money in her son's name, for the erection of a stone gateway of ancient design.

Circumstances of one kind and another baffled all our attempts to carry out the idea until quite recently, when we brought from a ruined temple in Southern India the ponderous sculptured pillars and cross-beam which are being erected on the entrance avenue in our grounds. The Princess, her son and elder daughter having died meanwhile, their three names were cut in the cross-beam ; and the structure, already 2,000 years old, as surmised, will for ages stand as a tribute of affection to their memory.[1]

The Overland mail brought me, about this time, a most cordial letter from a Christian Bishop, blessing our Society for what it was doing to stem the tide of scepticism and strengthen the religious spirit ; he wished to become a member, and asked permission and directions for forming a T. S. Branch ! Fancy that : a Bishop, and his letter stamped with the Episcopal seal. That was something brand new in our experience, for the clergy had for the most part been denouncing us in the pulpit and classifying us as sons of Belial. True, he was black, a full-blooded negro, as his photograph too plainly showed, yet a Bishop, all the same ; orthodox, consecrated in the Episcopal or American section of the Anglican Church. His diocese, Haïti. What good results might have followed for our cause it is hard to say, if the Island had not been upset shortly afterward by one of those political revolutions which are so common in Haïti and the South American states.

[1] While this book has been going through the press, the Prince Harisinhji, who was present at the Convention in Benares, lost his life from an accident on the morning of January 2, 1903.

In November I had by the same mail letters from Dr. Elliott Coues and Mr. Richard Harte, of New York, announcing the collapse of the Society in the United States; the former attributing it to my refusing to play the autocrat, or let him do so, and the latter to Coues having tried to "boss" everybody! My Diary note on them is that "Perhaps both are wrong and the T. S. is *not* collapsed over there," the reasonableness of which events have proved.

A flying visit was made between 19th and 22nd November to Cuddapah, where I lectured and formed the Cuddapah T. S.

By the first week of December Sanskrit poems for the Library opening had been received from Benares, Bengal, Bombay, and Madras Pandits; and Sanskrit and Pali verses from the most learned Buddhist priests of Ceylon. About the same time I received from H. P. B., for reading and revision by T. Subba Row and myself, the MS. of Vol. I of *The Secret Doctrine*; but in his then captious mood the former refused to do more than read it, saying that it was so full of mistakes that if he touched it he should have to rewrite it altogether! This was mere pique, but did good, for when I reported his remark to H. P. B. she was greatly distressed, and set to work and went over the MS. most carefully, correcting many errors due to slipshod literary methods, and with the help of European friends making the book what it is now. It must be said of her that she was always most eager to have mistakes pointed out, and most ready to correct them. Especially was that the case with such of her writings as were not dictated to her, psychically, by

the unseen Helpers who presided over the production of her two great books, *Isis* and *The Secret Doctrine*, which will be the Jachin and Boaz of her perpetual monument, a wonder to coming generations.[1]

The last touches to the Library were being given up to 22nd December, the lovely carved screen which has been the admiration of all visitors was set in place on the 19th, the Picture Room marble floor laid on the same and following day, that of the Library on the 22nd, and then the work was done. The first Delegates arrived on the 21st, and on the same evening I wrote my address for the opening Library ceremony. By every train more Delegates came from Bengal, the North-Western and Central Provinces, Bombay, Madras, and Ceylon, until the buildings were full to overflowing. As usual, I wrote my Annual Report on the evening

[1] I think she would have felt deeply mortified if she had lived to read the scathing and complete exposure of Keely's fraudulent demonstrations of his "Inter-Etheric Force," in her own magazine, *The Theosophical Review*, for May (1899), after what she had written about it in *The Secret Doctrine* (i, 556-566, first ed.). She knew nothing personally about Keely, taking her impressions and facts at second hand from a friend at Philadelphia—a shareholder in Keely's original company, and from Mrs. Bloomfield Moore, his enthusiastic disciple and backer: but she did know a great deal about the etheric and other forces and their potentialities, and had often proved, experimentally, her ability to handle them: so, without stopping to test Keely's theories or verify Mrs. Moore's alleged facts, she flew off at a tangent into a most instructive essay on cosmic forces, and by her unguarded half-endorsement of the now-proven charlatan, exposed one more large joint in her armor to the shafts of her sneering enemies. But what does it matter, after all? She was just H. P. B., and strode along with us, a giantess in various aspects, though perhaps a *gobemouche* when accepting unchallenged the statements of those who had too easily won her confidence.

of the 26th, and on the 27th at the fixed time the Convention organised and disposed of its work. This year's session was made memorable by a course of four lectures on the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, by T. Subba Row, which charmed his hearers and, in book form, are now among the most precious treasures of our Theosophical literature. They were a foretaste of the intellectual character which has been stamped upon our Adyar annual meetings by the discourses of Mrs. Besant. On the afternoon of the 27th the Buddhist priest, Medankara, of Ceylon, lectured in Pali, and—a fact which proves the close connection between Pali and Sanskrit—his remarks were interpreted to us in English by the late Adyar Library Pandit Bhashyacharya, who did not know Pali, but understood the speaker perfectly from his own deep knowledge of Sanskrit. A word must be said about this Medankara. He was of the Ramanya Nikāya, a young man, truly holy in his life and aims to a degree that I have never seen equalled among the bhikkus of Ceylon. A part of each year it was his custom to retire into the forest and spend the time in meditation, subsisting on berries and such other food as came in his way. Almost alone among the monks, he believed in the existence of our Masters, and his strongest yearning was to go to Tibet in search of them. He would have started in that very year had I not dissuaded him and used all my personal influence with him. He reluctantly went back to Ceylon, but so far from abandoning his project, sent me several urgent requests that I would let him go to the Ḥimālayas and help him on. But

alas! it was not his karma like Damodar's to seek and find the Teacher, for death soon caught him away from our sight, perhaps that he might soon reincarnate in a body better adapted to the accomplishment of his heart's wish.

The Library opening on the 28th was a complete success. Brahmin, Buddhist, and Parsi priests and a Muslim Maulvi participated. The scene was most impressive to a thoughtful mind.

However tinged with sectarian inclinations some of my colleagues may have been and are, even my ill-wishers must do me the justice to say that I have stubbornly opposed all attempts to put forth ex cathedra teachings. In fact, it has been my passion to uphold the platform of tolerance on which H. P. B. and I laid the foundations of the Society in the beginning, and I grasped the chance, which the opening of the Adyar Library offered, to put that idea before the world in a way that could not be misunderstood. Such a thing had never been seen in India as the religious teachers of the antipathetic sects of the East uniting in a ceremony like this; but, for that matter, India had never, before the uprising of the Theosophical Society, seen men of all the castes and Indian sects meeting together to celebrate the anniversaries of a religio-scientific body of foreign inception. We have been "making history" in a very real sense ever since we had that momentous drawing-room meeting in New York, when the idea of our Society was first broached by myself and supported by H. P. B., Judge, and others. And now these chapters are collected in book form to

serve as a contribution to the history of our movement, it is well for us to recall the incidents of the official opening of the Adyar Library on 28th December, 1886.

As stated, priests of Advaita and Visishthadvaita Hinduism, of Southern Buddhism, of Zoroastrianism, and of Islam were in attendance, and, as they were called, mounted the speaker's platform, and with ceremonies appropriate to their several religions, invoked blessings and prosperity on the enterprise. The crowded audience of Asiatics and Europeans showed the deepest interest in the proceedings. Each group of priests, after finishing its part of the programme, left the platform and gave place to the next, we laymen sitting there and watching the events whose like had never been seen or even dreamt of in India before. It was one of the happiest days of my life. A Pandit from Mysore invoked the favor of Ganapati, the god of occult research, and of Sarasvati, the Indian Pallas-Athene, or Minerva, patroness of learning; some boys from one of our Sanskrit schools chanted benedictory verses in the classical language of the Vedas; two Parsi Mobeds offered a prayer to Ahura Mazda and lit the fire of sandalwood in a silver brazier; the saintly Medankara and a colleague intoned the *Jayamangalam* in Pali; and a Muslim Maulvi from Hyderabad, with strong, clear voice, recited a prayer from the Koran. Then followed my official discourse, of which the following extracts are made from the report of the *Madras Mail*:

"We are met together, Ladies and Gentlemen, upon an occasion that is likely to possess an historical

interest in the world of modern culture. The foundation of a Library of such a character as this is among the rarest of events, if, indeed, it be not unique in modern times. We need not enumerate the great libraries of Western cities, with their millions of volumes, for they are, rather, huge storehouses of books ; nor the collections of Oriental literature at the India Office, and in the Royal and National Museums of Europe ; nor even the famed Saraswati Mahal, of Tanjore : all these have a character different from our Adyar Library, and do not compete with it. Ours has a definite purpose behind it, a specific line of utility marked out for it from the beginning. It is to be an adjunct to the work of the Theosophical Society ; a means of helping to effect the object for which the Society was founded, and which is clearly stated in its constitution. Of the three declared aims of our Society—

"The first is : 'To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, or color.'

"The second : 'To promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, and sciences.'

"The first is the indispensable antecedent to the second, as the latter is the logical consequence of the former. It would be impracticable to bring about any friendly co-operation by the learned of the several ancient faiths and races for the study of comparative religion and archaic philosophy and science, without first getting them to consent to work in mutual kindliness ; and, on the other hand, the establishment of this fraternal spirit would

naturally stimulate research into the records of the past, to discover, if possible, the basis of religious thought and human aspiration. Strife comes of mutual misunderstanding and prejudice, as unity results from the discovery of basic truth. Our Society is an agency of peace and enlightenment, and in founding this Library is but carrying out its policy of universal goodwill. We want, not so much number of books, as books of a useful sort for our purposes. We wish to make it a monument of ancestral learning, but of the kind that is of most practical use to the world. We do not desire to crowd our shelves with tons of profitless casuistical speculations, but to gather together the best religious, moral, practical, and philosophical teachings of the ancient sages. We aim to collect whatever can be found in the literature of yore upon the laws of nature, the principles of science, the rules and processes of useful arts. Some Aryaphiles are thoroughly convinced that the forefathers had rummaged through the whole domain of human thought, had formulated all philosophical problems, sounded all depths and scaled all heights of human nature, and discovered most, if not all, hidden properties of plants and minerals and laws of vitality : we wish to know how much of this is true. There are some so ignorant of the facts as to affirm their disbelief in the learning of the ancients and the value of the contents of the old books. To them, the dawn of human wisdom is just breaking, and in the Western sky. Two centuries ago—as Flammarion tells us—the Jesuits, Schillers, and Bayers proposed to have the stars and constellations rechristened with

Christian instead of Pagan names : the Sun was to be called *Christ* ; the Moon, *Mary Virgin* ; Saturn, *Adam* ; Jupiter, *Moses* ; etc., etc. : the orbs would have shone none the less brightly, and sectarianism would have been gratified ! In something of the same spirit, some of our improved Aryans seem disposed to obliterate the good old orbs of knowledge and set up new ones—putting out Vyasa, Manu, Sankara, Kapila, and Patanjali, the Aryan luminaries ; and lighting up Comte, Haeckel, Huxley, Spencer, and Mill. It would not be so reprehensible if they would be content to see all great and shining lights

. . . admitted to that equal sky.

We are all for progress and reform, no doubt, but it is yet to be proved that it is a good plan to throw away a valuable patrimony to clutch at a foreign legacy. For my part, I cannot help thinking that if our clever graduates knew as much about Sanskrit, Zend, and Pali literature as they do of English, the Rishis would have more, and modern biologists less, reverence. Upon that impression, at any rate, this Adyar Library is being founded.

" With the combined labor of Eastern and Western scholars, we hope to bring to light and publish much valuable knowledge now stored away in the ancient languages, or, if rendered into Asiatic vernaculars, still beyond the reach of the thousands of earnest students who are only familiar with the Greek and Latin classics and their European derivative tongues. There is a widespread conviction that many excellent secrets of chemistry, metallurgy, medicine, industrial

arts, meteorology, agriculture, animal breeding and training, architecture, engineering, botany, mineralogy, astrology, etc., known to former generations, have been forgotten, but may be recovered from their literary remains. Some go so far as to affirm that the old sages had a comprehensive knowledge of the law of human development, based upon experimental research. I confess that I am one of such, and that I am more and more persuaded that the outcome of modern biological research will be the verification of the Secret or Esoteric Philosophy. This firm conviction has made me so anxious to begin as soon as possible, while we are in health and strength, the gathering together of the present Library, and it shall not be my fault if it does not achieve its object within the lifetime of the majority of the present audience. If the ancient books are as valuable as some allege, the sooner we prove it the better; if they are not, we cannot discover the fact too speedily. That intellectual marvel of our times, Sir William Jones, had a better opinion of the merit of Sanskrit literature than our improved Aryans, it would appear. 'I can venture to affirm,' says he, in his Discourse before the Asiatic Society, delivered at Calcutta, February 20th, 1794—'I can venture to affirm, without meaning to pluck a leaf from the never-fading laurels of our immortal Newton, that the whole of his theology, and part of his philosophy, may be found in the Vedas, and even in the works of the Sufis. The *most subtle spirit*, which he suspected to pervade natural bodies, and, lying concealed in them, to cause attraction and

repulsion ; the emission, reflection, and refraction of light ; electricity, calefaction, sensation, and muscular motion, is described by the Hindus as a *fifth element*, endued with those very powers ; and the Vedas abound with allusions to a force universally attractive, which they chiefly ascribe to the Sun, thence called Aditya, or the Attractor.' Of Srī Shankara's commentary upon the Vedanta, he says that 'it is not possible to speak with too much applause of so excellent a work ; and I am confident in asserting that, until an accurate translation of it shall appear in some European language, the general history of philosophy must remain incomplete' ; and he further affirms that 'one correct version of any celebrated Hindu book would be of greater value than all the dissertations or essays that could be composed on the same subject'.

"An entire Upanishad is devoted to a description of the internal parts of the body—an enumeration of the nerves, veins, and arteries ; a description of the heart, spleen, and liver, and of pre-natal development of the embryo. If you will consult the most recent medical authorities, you will find the very remarkable fact—one recently brought to my notice by a medical member of our Society—that the course of the *sushumna*, or spinal tube, which, according to the Aryan books, connects the various *chakrams*, or psychic evolutionary centres in the human body, can be traced from the brain to the *os coccyx* : in fact, my friend has kindly shown me a section of it under a strong lens. Who knows, then, what strange biological and psychical discoveries may

be waiting to crown the intelligent researches of the modern anatomist and physiologist who is not above consulting the Aryan text-books? 'There are not in any language (save the ancient Hebrew),' says Sir William Jones, 'more pious and sublime addresses to the Being of beings, more splendid enumerations of his attributes, or more beautiful descriptions of his visible works, than in Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit.' But the theme is inexhaustible, and I must resist the temptation to collate the many accessible testimonies of some of the greatest scholars of our own time to the richness, value, and interest of the ancient books of Asia. In Europe and America these profound students and thinkers are working patiently, in sympathetic collaboration with colleagues, Asiatic and European, in India, Ceylon, Burma, Japan, China, Egypt, Assyria, and other Eastern countries.

"You will observe, Ladies and Gentlemen, from what precedes, that the Library we are now founding is neither meant to be a mere repository of books, nor a training school for human parrots who, like some modern Pandits, mechanically learn their thousands of verses and lacs of lines without being able to explain, or perhaps even understand, the meaning; nor an agency to promote the particular interests of some one faith or sectarian subdivision of the same; nor as a vehicle for the vain display of literary proficiency. Its object is to help to revive Oriental literature; to re-establish the dignity of the true Pandit, Mobed, Bhikshu, and Maulvi; to win the regard of educated men, especially that of the rising

generation, for the sages of old, their teachings, their wisdom, their noble example; to assist, as far as may be, in bringing about a more intimate relation, a better mutual appreciation, between the literary workers of the two hemispheres. Our means are small, but sincere motive and patient industry may offset that in time, and we trust to deserve public confidence. As an example of one branch of the work we have mapped out for ourselves, I beg to ask your present acceptance of copies of a catechetical synthesis of that branch of Hindu religious philosophy known as the Dwaita Doctrine of Srī Madhwacharya. The compiler, our learned and respected townsman M.R.Ry. P. Sreenivas Row, intends to follow this up with similar works upon the other two great religious schools of the Vishishthadwaita and Adwaita, founded respectively by Srī Ramanuja Acharya and Srī Sankaracharya. The *Buddhist Catechism*—of copies of which, in the name of Mrs. Ilangakoon, a worthy Buddhist lady of Ceylon, I also ask your acceptance—will be succeeded, as my time shall permit, by catechisms of the Zoroastrian and Mahomedan faiths, written from the standing-points of followers of those religions respectively.

"On behalf of the subscribers to the Library Fund, and of the General Council of the Theosophical Society, I now invoke upon this undertaking the blessing of all Divine powers and of all other lovers of truth, I dedicate it to the service of mankind, and I now declare it founded and duly opened."

The reader will see in this inauguration discourse the groundwork laid for that Oriental Institute which it is our hope to bring into existence at Adyar in the fulness of time. The work is, in point of fact, already half done. We have (*a*) in the Headquarters property buildings and grounds that leave but little to be desired; (*b*) five dwelling-houses in the Indian style for the free use of Library Pandits; (*c*) a large bathing-tank for castemen; (*d*) large permanent out-door brick dining-floors for use at any time; (*e*) large wells of pure, sweet water; (*f*) two libraries of Oriental and Western books, with shelf-room for 10,000 more; (*g*) a superb meeting- and lecture-hall and commodious classrooms; (*h*) bedrooms for European staff officers; (*i*) a tidal river under the house windows which cools the air, the blue sea a half-mile off in full sight, from which fresh breezes blow towards us daily, and groves of cocoanut palm, mango, banyan, and coniferous trees to give shady walks and retreats to those who incline towards meditation; (*j*) towards the £20,000 capital, without which it would be childish for me to float the scheme, we have Rs. 25,000 of Permanent Fund invested: the possible proceeds of the White Bequest, which within the next few years may (so thinks the executor, Mr. Barnes) give us some £8,000 but which cannot now be counted as an asset; and the capital, stock, and income of the *Theosophist* and other belongings which have been bequeathed to the Society. Little as these may seem at first sight, yet no one can deny that the prospects of the Adyar Oriental Institute are infinitely better than they were on that opening day

in 1886, when the Library's carven doors were swung open for the first time, and my inaugural address was delivered before that mixed audience of people of many races and various creeds. Any day, some enlightened and philanthropic friend may send me what is lacking to start the Institute on a sound financial footing ; in fact, I am sure of it.

Most of the Delegates stayed over for T. Subba Row's fourth and last lecture on the *Gîtâ*, on the morning of the 30th, which was a masterpiece of literary and oratorical ability ; after which the crowd melted away, and when the year 1886 closed, the house was restored to its normal quiet. Thus ended the eleventh annual chapter of the Society's history.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

# MORE TOURING IN CEYLON AND WESTERN INDIA

We now cross the threshold of 1887, one of the busiest and most fruitful periods of our history. The year's programme was sketched out in Executive Council on 9th January, and on the 22nd I sailed for Colombo, where I arrived on the 24th. The leaders of the Ramanya Nikāya at once took me to Piyāgale to assist in celebrating the first anniversary of the death of their chief priest, Ambagahawatte, whose cremation was recently described in this history. I addressed the large crowd present, and, later, privately met in consultation the whole body of priests of the Ramanya. I warned them solemnly against allowing themselves, on the strength of their deceased leader's reputation, to cultivate self-righteousness and its concomitant, hypocrisy; I had observed, I told them, the symptoms of sectarianism and narrow-mindedness showing themselves, which I deprecated as diametrically opposed to the spirit of the Lord Buddha's teaching. The warning was needed, and, I fancy, it would do no harm if it were repeated at the present day.

On the 27th I started for Badulla, a thriving station in the Uva District, situate about 4,000 ft. above sea-level, and possessed of a climate thoroughly renovating to European constitutions which have become debilitated by too long residence in the tropical lowlands. The railway from Colombo, *via* Kandy and Nanu Oya, which now runs to Bandarawela through some of the finest and most picturesque scenery in the world, had then been carried only as far as Nanu Oya, in the heart of the richest planting country, and so I was taken on the rest of the way in a special mail-coach. From the driver's seat we enjoyed the exquisite treat of the landscape views that opened out before the eye at every bend of the post-road. We stopped for the night at "Wilson's Bungalow," a Government rest-house, which we were glad enough to reach, for the road after dark was dangerous enough at any time by reason of its short curves and precipices, but now made much more so by the fact of our driver's being half drunk. I don't think I ever had a more anxious time than then, between nightfall and our arrival at the rest-house; I must have invented a half-dozen different ways of leaping or climbing over coach and driver towards the land-side, in case our bibulous Automedon should chance to drive his team over the brink of the chasm. All this was, however, soon forgotten with the appearance of a hot supper and a blazing wood fire, which the sharp, frosty air of the plateau made most grateful. And, by the way, nothing is more delightful and suggestive of home to the dweller in the Tropics, than the sense of shivering one gets at the hill-stations

and the longing for a big fire in one's room. One can have this experience after a few hours' climbing travel from the steaming plains to Simla, Mussoorie, Darjeeling, Ootacamund, or Kodaikānal : he can mount from India to Europe, so to say, within five hours.

Our coach started at 6.45 the next morning, the air fresh, the sun shining, the landscapes like pictures freshly painted on the slopes and valleys and peaks about us. At the seven-mile-post from Badulla one party of friends met and escorted us, at the four-mile-post another, and we entered town in a far-stretching procession of all the Buddhist notables of the place. We were lodged in comfortable quarters and given every necessary thing ; the new Buddhist flag waved everywhere in the breeze, and a " Welcome " arch and escutcheon stood before our door. At 4 p.m. I lectured in the Sapragamuva Divali, and, later, offered flowers to the image of the Buddha in the temple Mutyānangané, a shrine said to be 2,000 years old. Here occurred a striking incident. W. D. M. Appuhami, a Vedarrachi, or native doctor, had a remarkably clever son of ten years, who was showing much precocity in picking up Sanskrit from his father's books, and whose young mind had a strong religious bent. The parents, especially the mother—a gentle, sweet-eyed woman—being also full of religious fervor, wished to consecrate their child to the ascetic life of the pansala, or vihare, and so brought him to me at the time of my flower-puja, and gave him into my hands to do with him what I liked. So, taking the little chap into my arms, I thrice held him out towards the old statue of the

Buddha, each time repeating the familiar ascription : *Namo, Tassa, Bhagavatto, Arahatto, Samma Sambudhassa.* Then, returning him to the parents, I told them what to do to accomplish their object. To anticipate events somewhat, the boy did enter the Sangha, and I saw him at Galle in 1893 when there with Mrs. Besant and the Countess Wachtmeister.

The next day I had started for Colombo on my return ; that night slept again at the Wilson Bungalow ; rose at 3, to go on to Nanu Oya ; took train for Kandy and reached there at 2 p.m., only to fall into the toils of a Committee who had got up a big *perahĕra*, or procession, which took me (blushing with shamefacedness under the wondering gaze of European loiterers, and feeling every inch a fool) through the streets to my lodgings, with rattle of drum, screech of pipe, clang of cymbals, and contortions of devil-dancers—whose antics were made familiar to Londoners at the India-Ceylon Exhibition at Earl's Court three years ago. In fact, those very dancers had all danced before me in *perahĕras* at one or another place in Ceylon during past years. At Kandy I gave various lectures to adults and children, held meetings of the local T. S. Branch, and went on to Colombo on 3rd February.

I had the pleasure of presenting to the High Priest, Sumangala, Captain Fiéron of the French Navy and two others, on behalf of my dear old friend, Captain Courmes, of the same service. Sumangala is always glad and much interested to see Europeans who have given attention to Buddhism, and always thanks me for bringing

them to the College. Captain Fiéron was well versed in the principles of the religion, and a long conversation was held between the visitors and the High Priest, through myself as interpreter, with the results of which both parties were apparently much delighted.

Among the lectures delivered in and about Colombo this time was one to the lepers, who had sent a very urgent request to me to visit them and give them the Pancha Sila and a religious discourse as to their meaning. This unhappy class are segregated at Colombo on a grassy, palm-embellished islet a few miles from town, where Government has commodious buildings for their occupancy and medical treatment. They themselves have built a little preaching-hall in which Buddhist religious emblems are kept, and are overjoyed when they can get any Buddhist to come and teach them something about their religion. It is a frightful experience, however, to face such an audience and see the distortions and mutilations caused in the human body by this pest of mankind. I had to shut my eyes a moment and brace myself up to the revolting sights before me, before beginning the Sila ceremony with the solemnly resounding Pali words of the opening sentence. Then, again, some extra interest was given to the occasion by the thought that perhaps one might get infected with the microbes of the awful disease, as Father Damien had and others. Of course, it was but a remote chance at best, yet it was one, just as it depends on one's Karma whether the bullet of Private X of the enemy's regiment in front of one's

position shall find its billet in one's body or elsewhere; and until our doctors know more of the cause and cure of leprosy, such precautionary reflections are excusable. Well, the afflicted ones at Leper Island were very grateful for the visit and forgot the mutilations of their hands and their necessarily unlovely appearance, when they joined their palms together in front of their foreheads, and sent after me towards the flower-festooned barge their mournful cry of *Sadhu! Sadhu!*

The same evening I found myself in quite a different scene, when, at our Colombo Headquarters, we held the annual elections for officers of the Branch, and all, of every caste, sat together at the usual dinner.

To Galle my programme took me next, and thither I went by coach on the 7th. Outside the town the late Mr. Simon Perera, President of our Branch, and the other chief Buddhists, met me, and we entered Galle in procession. During the week I spent there, I was, as usual, kept busy with lectures to adults, talks to youth, arbitrating in quarrels between rival societies, seeing Bulatgama—H. P. B.'s "Father-in-God" of 1880—and doing other things that came my way. I was pleased with a visit made me by Cornelis Appu, my first paralytic patient of 1883, the predecessor of thousands who came after him. His paralysis had not returned after my treatment of him, and his gratitude was correspondingly fervent. But all my patients did not have such good luck.

On my return to Colombo I began compiling the epitome of Buddhist morals, since widely known

under the title of *The Golden Rules of Buddhism*. It is incredible how ignorant the Ceylon Buddhists were of the merits of their own religion, and how incapable of defending it from unscrupulous Missionaries who were then much more than now—though too much even now—in the habit of reviling their neighbor's faith in the hope of advancing the interests of their own. To meet this want the little monograph in question was compiled.

It is not a pleasant thing to say aught against the dead, but the dead and the living are alike in the eye of the historian who but records events and leaves Karma to work out its own adjustments. At the time in question I had every reason to be dissatisfied with the behavior of Megittuwatte, the orator, the champion of Buddhism at the famous intellectual tournament at Panadure which proved a terrific blow to Missionary work He was a man of mixed characteristics and motives. He had helped me to raise the Sinhalese National Buddhistic Fund in the Western Province, and when the Trust Deed was being drafted had given us no end of bother. His aim seemed to have been to get the absolute control of the money, regardless of the rights of all who had also helped in the raising of the funds; and at this time, four years later, his vindictiveness and combativeness burst out afresh. He attacked the Colombo Branch, asked why they had not opened schools throughout the Province, and raved away as though a lac or two or three had been collected instead of a beggarly Rs. 4,000, the interest on which would be only Rs. 400, and of that only one half,

under the terms of the Trust, could be used for aiding Buddhist schools. From having been my enthusiastic panegyrist, he had now turned to the other side, and, always a specious and silvery-tongued man, had begun to drag the amiable High Priest into his way of thinking, and to make inevitable a breach between us, which to Sinhalese Buddhism at that time would have been very harmful. He had asked me to lecture at his temple at Kotahena on the 18th, which I did to a great crowd; but one may guess my feeling of anger and disgust when I learnt that the fiery discourse in Sinhalese, with which he followed my lecture, was a venomous attack on the Colombo B. T. S. and myself. Sumangala was present and seemed shaken in his friendship for me, but joined with Megittuwatte in asking me to lecture on the following evening at the same place. The next morning, while thinking how I could escape from the trap that was being fixed for me to walk into, I learnt that a steamer of the British India line would sail that forenoon for Bombay, so I got my things quickly packed, called a carriage, bought my ticket, and by 11.30 a.m. was on the wide ocean, sailing away from the wily fowler who had spread his net for a bird too old to be caught so very easily. I left my parting compliments for him, with a message that he might lecture in my place!

During the nineteen years of close intercourse between Sumangala and myself, this was the only time when there was even a small chance of a breach being made in our friendship. Megittuwatte did his best to crush our brave little group of hard workers

in the Colombo Branch. He even started a small paper, in which, for months, he exhausted his armory of invectives, but all to no purpose. The only result was to weaken his influence, lessen his popularity, and expose himself as a selfish, uncharitable, and pugnacious man, while actually strengthening our hold on the public sympathy.

Reaching Bombay on the fifth day, I was kindly welcomed by our colleagues and put up in the Society's rooms, from the windows of which I had one of the prettiest panoramas of land and sea imaginable. The large audience which greeted me at our old lecturing-place, Framji Cowasji Hall, showed that our removal to Madras had not destroyed our hold on the affections of the Bombay public. After a week there I went on to Bhaunagar, the very misnamed "Model Native State" of Sir Edwin Arnold, which, with much that was fair-seeming on the outside, had more or less moral rottenness, I fear, inside.[1] Sir Edwin was treated with lavish hospitality, and having revisited the East predisposed to see everything rose-colored, he did not lift the lids of the gorgeous caskets in India and Ceylon and see the foul linen so often kept within. During the minority of the late Maharajah many public works had been carried through by the agents of Government, and so Bhaunagar is called a progressive State, and we may let it pass at that. My host and friend on this occasion was, of course, the Maharajah's cousin, Prince Harisinhji, F.T.S., and my visit to him was a most pleasant episode.

[1] Of late years things have greatly improved, I am happy to say.

I exchanged visits with most of the high officials of the State, had an audience and long talk with the Maharajah, and also paid my respects to the late ex-Dewan Udaiyashankar Gouriashankar, C.S.I., then an octogenarian and nominal sanyasi. I say nominal because, while officially retired from the world and clad in the red-yellow cloths of the Indian ascetic, and wearing a large string of beads around his neck, he still clung to his immense fortune, and his three anterooms were crowded with the same worldly-looking courtiers as one sees in the apartments of all native prime ministers. I tried to get him to promise to devote large sums to religious purposes, but he always changed the conversation, and I finally took my leave with a different opinion of his sanctity from that which Sir Edwin gives in his book of travels, and has expressed elsewhere. It is the rule, not the exception, throughout India, that retired Government pensioners who, throughout a long official career have been immersed in worldly interests, assume the externals of piety when the goal of their incarnation comes within sight; but I have my own opinion about their having any real "change of heart" and inward purification.

I had the pleasure while at Bhaunagar of being joined by Mr. E. T. Sturdy, of New Zealand, who has since then played a prominent part in our Society's affairs. He accompanied Prince Harisinhji and myself to Junagad, the next Native State on our programme. In the Hindu Dewan of this Muslim State, Mr. Haridas Viharidas, I found one of the ablest, most energetic, and high-minded men I had met in

India : in nervous activity and clearness of judgment he was of the Western rather than the Oriental type. Everything possible he did for us. Among other things he took us to see a very fine collection of Indian lions and other animals in the Nawab's Sirkar Bagh, and what was still better, to see the world-famous rock at Girnar on which the Emperor Dharmasoka had had inscribed, two thousand years ago, one of his noble Edicts. By request, this being a Muslim State, I lectured on "Islam," the Nawab's brother-in-law occupying the chair. The next day, in the High School, by request of the Hindu community, I lectured on Theosophy, as from the Hindu point of view. The Dewan Sahib was chairman, and kindly headed a subscription for the Adyar Library with the sum of Rs. 200. He also arranged for me a Durbar of the strange religious sect founded by the Swami Narayan a few years before. It differs from all other Indian sects in its Head *being a family man* and dressing in layman's clothes. Under him are a great body of ascetics, who wear the red-yellow cloths of the ordinary sanyasi, and another group or class of householders, who attend to all the business affairs of the fraternity—a sort of lay brothers, so to say. Though but a young sect it had amassed a good deal of wealth, I was told, and the richness of the temple where the Durbar was held, especially its floor of pure Italian marble skilfully matched and laid, and its gilt railing behind which were the cloths, wooden sandals, and staff of the late Swamiji, confirmed that impression. I asked the presiding functionary to tell me what signs of spiritual power the Founder had

given, and was told that he had healed some diseases and done certain phenomena beyond the power of ordinary persons. It then appeared to me as plain as day what H. P. B. and I *might* have done in India for our own enrichment and glorification if we had displayed our respective gifts—hers of phenomena, mine of healing—and played upon the ever-ready credulity of the masses by the falsehood of a special divine mission.

We left for Bhaunagar again on the 15th (March), and visited other places of interest there. The grand carved doors of the Adyar Library, on which are represented the Ten Avatāras of Vishnu, were the gift of Harisinhji, and at Bhaunagar were awaiting my inspection before shipment. Imagine my surprise on finding that each avatāra panel was flanked by tiny medallions in which were carved emblems which the native artisan thought would be most acceptable to the European taste. There they were, a silent sermon for our edification ; on one, a pistol ; on another, a corkscrew ; on a third, a soda-water bottle ; on a fourth, a padlock, etc. ! And the innocent carver could not understand in the least the expression of horror that came into my face when I saw these artistic monstrosities. His own look of blank astonishment was too much for my gravity, and I exploded in laughter, giving him, no doubt, a suspicion that I was not altogether sane. The doors were *not* shipped until the offensive symbols had been cut out and replaced with lotus buds, as they now stand. On the 18th Mr. Sturdy left me for Ceylon to attend to some Society business

there, and on the next day I went on with Harisinjih to his private estate at Varal. We reached the confines of the village after dusk, and a torchlight procession, with Brahmanic chants, floral showers and wreaths, escorted me to the Prince's house. Then followed sixteen days of sweet rest and friendly intercourse; by day working at correspondence and inspecting the farms and fruit-gardens, in the evening sitting together on Indian carpets laid on the grass, the air perfumed with floral scents, my friend and I smoking, his beloved wife talking to us in her soft, musical tones, and the household servants and feudal retainers grouped in the background to listen to the music and songs of the Prince's sitar player; above us the stars and the azure sky of the Indian night. On the evening of the 25th there came a troupe of Brahmin jugglers and comedians, whose performances were most skilful. There were plate-spinning on sticks, with bodily twists and contortions; dancing on naked sword-blades with the bare feet, and on wooden sandal-soles, which had no peg or strap for the toes to catch hold of; balancing of a goglet (Indian decanter) of black glass on the head, and the working of it forward to the nose, backward to the nape of the neck, and sidewise to the temples, and many other feats of skill, all wonderful. I supposed this was the last of them, but the next evening, as we sat out in the starlight, there suddenly rose the cry, "Hari! Hari! Mahade-e-va!" at the bottom of the garden, and I saw striding towards us a tall, majestic figure made up like the familiar picture of Siva himself as the Yogi—matted locks, staff, tiger-skin mantle

and all, a most impressive surprise. He came to an appointed spot near us, and then we had a sort of mystery play enacted, Siva doing a number of *āsanas*, or yogic posturings, and other gods performing their respective parts, with as finished skill as our best actors could have done on our prepared stage. A—to me—jarring note was the buffoonery of a sort of clown, personating a Bania retail merchant haggling with customers, exceedingly well done, yet quite inharmonious with the religious play of the gods led by the mighty Siva. The next day this latter actor gave us a small proof of his yogic training by burying his head in the ground and keeping it there some time, the loose earth having been thrown in and pressed about his head by an attendant.

My visit reached its close at last, and on 5th April the Prince and I left Varal for Limbdi, the enlightened ruler of which State had invited me to pay him a visit.

## CHAPTER XXIX

## THUGS—THE PRINCE OF WALES IN DANGER

BOTH Nature and the Prince gave us a warm welcome to Limbdi, our next station, for the mercury stood at 102° Fahr. in the shade, and Thākur Saheb Jaswantsinhji Fatehsinhji did everything to show his pleasure in our visit. Limbdi is a small Kāthiāwār State of the second class (its area is 344 sq. miles), whose rulers are of the Jhala Rājput caste—that is to say, hereditary warriors and possessed of the usual vices and virtues of the class, the former active in the olden time of fightings and struggles, the latter now developing rapidly under the changed conditions of to-day. Among the Rājput Princes of Kāthiāwār there are, however, some who do not throw great credit upon their stock—drinking, gambling, and amusement filling up the round of their years. But the Limbdi Thākur is an honor to his family and his people, well educated, kindly, an enlightened ruler, and deeply interested in the profounder questions of thought. He and Harisinhji were schoolfellows, I believe, at Rajkumar College, where the reigning cricket favorite, Ranjitsinhji, and all the young Chiefs of Kāthiāwār have been and are educated under the eye of the Government. His Private Secretary, Mr. Khimchund, F.T.S., and other gentlemen met

us on arrival at the station, and conducted us to the place assigned for our entertainment. The Dewan, Harilal, called in the morning, and the Prince received us at the Palace at 1.30 p.m. We had a long and friendly talk together about Theosophy and Hindu religion, in which His Highness is greatly interested. He showed us in his fine library a shelf, where I saw *Isis Unveiled*, the volume of my lectures, and other Theosophical literature, all bearing marks of having been much handled. The Palace, a new construction, is a handsome building, and in the Durbar, or reception-room, we had the opportunity to admire, if we so chose, a large gold and silver framed *gādi*, or throne-seat, with a pair of carved, silver-mounted arm-chairs with lion-head ornaments, for visiting dignitaries to occupy on occasions of ceremony. Considering that the State has a population of only some 50,000, and an annual revenue of, say, £25,000 to £30,000, it seemed to me that so much display was rather unnecessary ; yet that is the Rājput character, and there is nothing to be said by outsiders, save this —which I have said before—that if the commercial travellers for the great jewelry houses of Bombay and Calcutta were less glib as talkers and less cunning in playing off the vanities of Indian ruling princes against each other, there would be fewer of such costly toys as these thrones, chairs, and sofas in Indian palaces, and less financial embarrassment felt when paying the bills. There seems no remedy save the interference of the Paramount Power, and yet it is hard to see how even that can be resorted to without invading the private rights of both buyers and

sellers. It would be possible to create some sort of a safeguard about the young Princes in one way, *viz.*, by educating them at the Rajkumar Colleges as sensibly and practically as the Royal Princes of Great Britain have been educated, so that they might at least begin their rule with characters well grounded in the homely virtues, and not, as at present, spoilt in boyhood by sycophantic flattery, and left to be the prey of tradesmen who bribe the *durbaris* and charge the exorbitant commissions in the bill. I beg pardon for having been led into this digression, but the sight of the costly seats in the Palace of Limbdi brought up before me the recollection of this great evil as I have seen it exhibited throughout India. The poor victimised Rajahs, Thakurs, Nawabs, and Maharajahs of this country are sponged upon by whites to an extent that nobody would believe who had not seen it himself and got the facts at first hand. This, however, is not at all apropos of our host, the Thakur Saheb, whose sweet hospitality calls for my most kind and friendly remark. Each day of our visit he came and took Prince Harisinhji and myself out for a drive and to show us the sights. One day he took us to see his Guru, a Sanyasi, whose feet he worshipped in the Eastern fashion, by prostrations and the placing of the teacher's feet on his own head. We all sat on the carpet cross-legged, and for a couple of hours or so discussed religious questions. It was a picturesque scene, and would have made the subject of an excellent photograph.

One day, at the Prince's request, I lectured in the palace Durbar Hall on Mesmerism, and as my friend

Mr. L. V. V. Naidu, who was with me as volunteer Private Secretary, is, fortunately, very susceptible to my influence, I was able to show some interesting scientific experiments. His Highness, after the usual evening drive, returned with us to our bungalow, and spent another hour in talk about Mesmerism and Hypnotism, with illustrative experiments on my friend. After we had called at the Palace (on 8th April) to say farewell, the Prince sent to our lodgings a present of Rs. 500 for the Adyar Library, with a very kind and too complimentary letter to myself.

From Limbdi we went on to Baroda, the grand capital city of the Gaikwar Maharajah, where we were received as State guests and lodged sumptuously. The new Palace is one of the finest buildings in India, and compares favorably with European palaces which are not fortresses. The Gaikwar is one of the premier feudatories of the British Government, and, at the same time, one of the most intellectual and best educated. My only complaint against him is that he was so thoroughly anglicised by his English tutor as to have got out of touch with his ancestral religion. In my various discussions with him at Baroda, Calcutta, and Ootacamund, he has always posed as agnostic, and shown a decided scepticism about the existence of spiritual powers in man. I have had talks by the hour, most interesting yet unsatisfactory, because of his ignorance of the facts now proven by modern psychical research. His manners are most courteous, and there is an entire absence of that reserve and

hauteur one somehow expects to see in Asiatic Princes.

A much more congenial spirit to me is Mr. Manibhai Jasbhai, then Naib Dewan (Under-Secretary of State, as one might say), a man of the highest character and most brilliant acquirements. When H. P. B. and I first came to Bombay, in 1879, he was Dewan of Kutch, and from the beginning showed a real interest in our work and in ourselves personally. Naturally one of my first visits was to the house of my old friend, in company with my other old and dear friend J. S. Gadgil, Judge of the Baroda Varishta (High) Court. The next day I lectured at the College to students, but many adults, including H. E. the Dewan Saheb, Mr. Cursetji, Chief Justice, Judge Gadgil, Mr. Manibhai and others, were present. After the lecture the Dewan Saheb took me for a drive, and later he and several other notables of the State spent a couple of hours at my quarters in conversation, about Mesmerism among other things; and as the rumor of my Limbdi experiments on "Doraswamy" had reached town, I was asked to repeat them for the instruction of the company present.

On the following day the Dewan Saheb headed a subscription in aid of the Adyar Library, with the gift of Rs. 200, and Messrs. Gadgil and Manibhai followed suit. I was very ill that day from having eaten some bad plantains and milk for breakfast, but I determined to stick to my programme, despite the friendly protests of Mr. Gadgil and others; so at 3.25 p.m. we took train for Surat, which we reached at 8, and were put up at the travellers' bungalow on the

banks of the River Tapti. During my stay the Surat T. S. (an efflorescence of the Sanatana Dharma Sabha) was formed with that most respected, unselfish, and pious Mr. Navtamram Ootamram Trivedi as President. Under his fostering care the Branch has been ever since one of the best on our roll, and, with the accession of Dr. Edal Behram, Surat has been one of the strong centres of our movement in India. Among others who acquired membership during my visit occur the notable names of the popular Guzerati poet, Vijiashankar Kavi, and Dr. Nariman, the Civil Surgeon, a learned Parsi gentleman.

We reached Bombay on the 17th, and from thence, two days later, went on to Poona, that great centre of progressive ideas and intellectual culture. Lectures were given at Heerabagh and the Albert Edward Institute to large audiences, after which we returned to Bombay and I took up the task of preparing the programme for my projected tour through Northern India—the Central and North-Western Provinces, Punjab, Behar, and Bengal. It was printed for circulation, and from the copy now before me I cite a passage or two as of general interest, *viz.* : it says that "by strict economy the tour expenses have been so reduced that the share payable by each Branch will not exceed Rs. 17. . . . If 1 rupee (1s. 4d.) per diem be also given, this will cover every expense for fuel, milk, and food required at the station and bought elsewhere. Col. Olcott particularly notifies Branches to pay no more than this on his account to anybody for anything. This caution is suggested by the wasteful generosity often hitherto indulged

in by his friends, as well as by impositions practised upon them in his name. The travelling expense account covers every item for tongas, bullock dāks, steamboat fares, meals at railway stations, extra luggage charges, porterage, etc., etc." It was most disagreeable for me to seem to wish to interfere with the hospitable impulses of my affectionate colleagues and friends, but I really could not stand by quietly and see sometimes hundreds of rupees thrown away on my visit, when the merest trifle would have satisfied all my necessities. Anyhow, the precaution was a good one, for the 10,000 miles of my tour of 1887 were made at the cost of less than £100, everything included. I was much amused, on arriving at a certain station in Bengal, to see how literally the following paragraph in the printed Programme Notes had been complied with :

"Branches will kindly have ready upon Col. Olcott's arrival the following articles, the cost of which may be deducted from the per-diem allowance, *viz.* : 2 large earthen water-pots ; firewood ; 1 seer of milk ; 1 loaf bread ; 1 seer sugar. Also one Mohammedan coolie to assist in the kitchen."

Before the greeting salutations were fairly over, one of the Reception Committee took me aside and showed me that the articles I required had all been brought—to the station platform ! A queer place for me to set up my kitchen, to be sure.

It must not be inferred from what precedes, however, that an outsider could travel so cheaply in India, for in my case there were no hotel bills to pay, I travelled second class everywhere, I was a vegetarian,

and my food cost less than a pet dog's would in England or France.

I note an entry in my Diary for April 25, 1887, to the effect that "very bad news is received to-day from Ostende about my dear 'chum's' health. The physicians report H. P. B. as lying between death and life. But she will *not* die yet". She didn't.

With K. M. Shroff, Dr. Rāy, and Tookaram Tatya I paid a visit to the Bai Sakerbai Hospital for Animals, one of the worthiest charities in all India. The initiative of this benefaction was either made by our colleague Mr. Shroff, or he was the one who made it the great success it is. Mr. Shroff went into the great bazaar of Bombay, got the *shetts* or headmen of the different classes of traders to call them together separately, addressed them upon their duties as Hindus to care for the brute creation, and actually persuaded them to self-impose a tax on their trade returns for the upkeep of such a Hospital: the headmen agreeing in each case to be responsible for the collection of the tax. In this way an annual income of some Rs. 30,000—if I rightly remember—was assured. He then persuaded the high-minded, philanthropic wife of Sir Dinshah Maneckji Petit, Bai Sakerbai, to give a suitable piece of land and, I think, necessary buildings. The Hospital being thus founded, Mr. Shroff set other forces to work, and got the Bombay Government to take the wise step of attaching the Hospital to the Veterinary College, thus at once affording to the students the best possible chance for professional training, and giving the sick animals every necessary medical and surgical

help. If a monument should ever be erected to Mr. Shroff he ought to be represented, as Srī Krishna is, leaning against a cow. For infinitely smaller services than his, hosts of men have been decorated by the Government of India.

On 27th April I started for the North, my first objective point being Nagpur, in the Central Provinces. I was alone with Babula, my servant, Prince Harisinhji having left me in Guzerat, and L. V. V. Naidu at Bombay. It was the hot season and travelling was about the most unpleasant thing to do, the mercury standing even at midnight at about 100° Fahr. Some friends tried to persuade me not to incur the risk of heat-apoplexy, often so fatal to Europeans, but I was quite willing to take the chances, and so held to my programme. At Nagpur I was kept busy day and evening with conversaziones, initiations, visits, Branch formation, and public lectures to packed crowds, with the heat of a furnace, almost, to bear. We got at this station one of our most important members, Mr. C. Narainswamy Naidu, the leading Pleader of the Central Provinces, whose activity in Society matters, including the Adyar Conventions, up to the time of his death, everybody knows. No good scheme for promoting its interests went unhelped by him, no call was made in vain. At the close of my lecture in the native theatre, Nagpur, on "Chitragupta," Mr. Narainswamy threw over my shoulders—as Indian Princes do to guests—a red Kashmir shawl, handsomely gold-embroidered. A number of European officials showed a considerable interest in Theosophy, attended the

lectures, and some of them joined the Society. To Hoshangabad next, a day's train journey, with the heat at 106°, and nothing to suggest the need of a blanket or overcoat. Elsewhere I have described the beauty of a moonlight scene on the steps of the great bathing-ghāt on the bank of the sacred Nerbudda River, the silvery splendor of the massive stone staircase, the white-domed temples, and the river flowing along between its history-crammed banks. The night of my arrival I received two addresses on the platform of the ghāt, the company sitting on Oriental carpets and the whole picture an Asiatic one. There was not even one European costume to mar its effect, as I wore my Indian muslin dress because of the oppressive heat. I lectured at the same place the next evening on the necessity for promoting the study of Sanskrit. On the third evening the Branch celebrated its Anniversary, Brahmin Pandits reciting benedictory slokas, after which the Branch members distributed wheat to beggars after the ancient custom. The evening's proceedings closed with another lecture by myself. Each morning, before sunrise, I enjoyed the luxury of a swim in the sacred stream. On 5th May I went on to Jubbulpore, the home of my old friend, Nivaran Chandra Mukerji, and his family, all most interested in the work and welfare of our Society.

A notable incident of my visit to this station was a call at the Prison, where I saw some of the very Thugs, Dacoits, and Prisoners described in Col. Meadows Taylor's thrilling Indian tales. One old man told me he had "only killed one man," thus

seeming to imply that he was a very pattern of moderation. He showed me how they handle the *roomal* (handkerchief) in strangling—a very simple and efficacious process. Shall I describe it? Perhaps not, lest it might suggest to some ripened yet not actually developed assassin the easiest, quietest, least brutal way of disposing of a troublesome witness or other chosen victim. Doubtless the thing has been described in print before, but that is not my fault; let every one look to his own Karma. I saw at another prison once an old Thug who had killed many men, and who, at the request of the Heir Apparent, had practically shown him how to do the trick, by putting the roomal about the Royal neck and giving a preliminary twist. I was told by a Jail Officer that on seeing a strange fire of ferocity flame up in the Thug's eyes at that moment, he stopped the experiment on the instant. Had he not, the Prince might have had his neck broken, for the skilful Thug kills his man by a single twist of the roomal, before his body has time to fall to the ground.

Thuggee is now practically extinct in India, but it was a fearful pest while it lasted. The Thugs were hereditary assassins, ostensibly cultivators, and, in fact, they did work their farms during a portion of the year, after which they would start out on their expeditions of pillage and murder, followed by the blessings of their families, the approval of their tainted neighbors, and the protection of native rulers, who shared with them the fruit of their spoils, and gave them refuge when danger threatened. From father to son, generation after generation, the tradition

of the glory of their calling was handed down, and the training of their youth was most carefully attended to. In the *History of the Thugs* (Nattali & Bond, London, 1851) the author says :

" The children of Thugs, during their more tender years, are, it appears, kept in ignorance of the occupation of their fathers. After a time they are permitted to accompany them ; but a veil is thrown over the darker scenes of the drama. To the novice, indeed, the expedition presents nothing but an aspect of pleasure. He is mounted on a pony ; and being, by the laws of the Thugs, entitled to his share of the booty, he receives a portion of it in presents suited to his years—the delight attending the acquisition being unalloyed by any consciousness of the means by which it has been obtained. The truth reveals itself by degrees. In a short time the tyro becomes aware that his presents are the fruits of robbery. After a while, he has reason to suspect that robbery is aggravated by a fouler crime ; at length, suspicion passes into certainty ; and, finally, the pupil is permitted to witness the exercise of the fearful handicraft which he is destined to pursue. The moral contamination is now complete ; but it is long before the disciple is entrusted with the performance of the last atrocity. He passes through a long course of preparatory study . . . before being *elevated to the dignity of a strangler.*"

The book from which the above is taken is doubtless out of print, but one can get a graphic account of

Thuggee, that most detestable of crimes, by reading Meadows Taylor's *Confessions of a Thug*, which is procurable almost anywhere. My reader will understand with what painful interest and loathing I gazed at the conscienceless assassins before me in the Jubbulpore Prison, wondering how many times each had inveigled unsuspecting travellers to their doom, and broken their spines with a twist of his fatal noose. From the conquest of Mysore in 1799 to 1808 the practice counted its victims by hundreds annually, some of the more audacious villains had been concerned in above two hundred murders, and it has been computed that a Thug of fifty years has slain at the very least ten victims a year during the twenty-five years of his active work. Here is a nice problem in Karma for the metaphysical Theosophist to work out. Whose the greater crime, the father strangler who deliberately corrupts his son and destroys his moral sense, or the child whose murderous arm has been trained to destroy life ?

## CHAPTER XXX

## H. P. B. FOUNDS "LUCIFER"

THE disturbing factor in our Indian Branch formation is, as above noticed, the constant transfer of Government servants from one station to another. This makes it always impossible to forecast the term of a Branch's activity, as that depends upon the length of stay at the station of the one, two, or three leading spirits who caused the Branch to come into being, lead its members in Theosophical work, and make it seem to their colleagues that without them the Branch must collapse. For this reason it is always wise, where possible, to put residents of the town, such as pleaders, merchants, doctors, or teachers, not in Government service, into the offices of President and Secretary, when the cleverer or more enthusiastic Government employé is likely to be transferred within the next few months. But, if the system of transfers sometimes causes the temporary collapse of Branches, it also tends to the resuscitation of collapsed Branches or the formation of new ones by the transfer of these precious Theosophical workers to stations where their help is most needed. So moves on this ponderous Indian official machine, and, concomitantly, the Theosophical movement in

India surges ahead, ever broadening and strengthening, ever settling down upon the strong foundations which we have laid for it in the Indian heart.

The foregoing remarks are apropos of the languishing states in which I found the Nagpur T. S. and the Sanskrit School, for whose upkeep I had raised a generous sum at a public meeting two years previously. Several of our best working members had been transferred.

I reached Benares again on May 9th (1887), and was most kindly received at the station and put up in a garden-house of Babu B. S. Bhattacharji, of Gaya, a candidate for membership in our Society. I stopped here three full days, visited the late venerable Swami Bhaskarananda, whose welcome to me was most cordial. and Māji, the Yogīnī. One lecture at the Town Hall on "The Book of Chitragupta" was my only public appearance this time, and on the 12th I went on to Allahabad—now like a banquet-hall deserted, after the departure of the Sinnetts, in whose house had been the old local focus of the moment. Without them and without H. P. B. the town seemed empty. In fact, this tearing away of H. P. B. from me was constantly brought up in my mind by visiting the stations where she and I had been together, having our first Indian experiences and dreaming over dreams for the revival of Eastern learning and religion. One would need to have been so closely joined to her as I was in this world-work, to realise what it must have been to me to go over the old ground and see the old faces of friends. Ahi! Ahi! O Lanoo, these meetings and partings are fraught with sorrow. But you and I know

how many ages we have worked together under the guidance of the One; how many more of like relationships lie before us. *Vale, Salve*!

The heat? Awful, wilting, metal-melting. I went to see my friend the Swami Madhavdas, the compiler of *Sayings of Grecian Sages*, and had an agreeable talk with that good Sage. My rooms were thronged daily with conundrum-asking young metaphysicians and amateur agnostics, whose ardor was not damped by the rise of the mercury. On the 15th I lectured at the Kyastha Patshāla on "The Other World," but in so weak a condition of body that I had to sit during the last half of the discourse. This was the immediate result of dysenteric symptoms brought on by indigestible food, aggravated by the intense, debilitating heat. The next day I was worse, and felt so used up that my friends begged me to stay quiet a few days; but I could not afford to waste time with so long an itinerary before me, so I went on to Cawnpore, arrived there at 5 p.m., and was most affectionately welcomed. They put me up at the large bungalow of H. H. the Maharajah of Burdwan, where Damodar and I stopped in 1883, and at which occurred the convincing phenomenon of the introduction into my locked tin office-box of a letter from one of the Masters, which was described in an earlier chapter. Dr. Mahendranath Ganguli, F.T.S., finding me so weak, strongly recommended my taking chicken broth, which, after some hesitation, I did, thus breaking the vegetarian course of diet which I had been following for several years. The effect was instantaneous, my physical strength poured into me in full force, and by

the next day I was quite recovered. From that time on I did not return to vegetable diet until about two years ago, when I did so on the advice of the French clairvoyant, Mme. Mongruel (queerly appropriate name for the occasion !), with the happiest results. A Hindu banquet to forty Bengali gentlemen, given in my honor by Babu Nilmadab Banerji on the same day, and a second lecture on the next, followed, and at midnight I took train for Aligarh, where three days were spent profitably in the usual way. Next came Bulandshahr. I was here publicly insulted by a boorish civilian, my first experience of the kind in India. This man was a bigoted cad wholly ignorant of Indian literature, correspondingly intolerant, and devoid of good breeding. However, I settled him, to the satisfaction of my audience. The weather was now so hot and the audiences so uncomfortably large, that we held our meetings out of doors whenever possible, carpets and mats being spread on the grass, and chairs placed for the more important personages, durbar fashion, in parallel lines facing each other. Meerut and then Hardwar, the pilgrimage resort at the head waters of the sacred Ganges, came next. A great Sanskrit Revival Convention was sitting, at the latter place, at the call of the aged Dewan Ramjas, retired Prime Minister of Kapurthala State, whose idea was to organise a large and strictly national Society of Sanskrit Pandits, to work together for the revival of the ancient religion and literature. By request, I addressed the Convention, or "Bharata Dharma Maha Mandal," and when my address was finished, Resolutions of thanks to myself and of

confidence in the Theosophical Society were adopted by acclamation. This was a good point to score, for, owing to my open profession of Buddhism, and H. P. B.'s, the Society had always been looked at askance as, perhaps, secretly hostile to Hinduism, and, possibly, a Buddhistic agency of propaganda, though not the least cause had been given for so unjust a misrepresentation of our policy as a Society. The fact is, eclecticism in religion is the least conceivable attitude of mind to sectarians, whatsoever form of religion they may follow,[1] and our Society is to-day in Burma, and to a much less extent in Ceylon, suspected of ultra-Hinduism because of Mrs. Besant's bold avowal of her religious preferences, as it was, fifteen years ago, of being exclusively Buddhistic, because of its two Founders and Damodar having taken the Five Precepts from Dharmarama Terunnanse at Galle, in 1880, in presence of a great multitude of excited Buddhists. But time scatters all illusions, and the truth at the end prevails.

It is worth the while of an Anglo-Indian to visit Hardwar for the sake of the view of the grand scenery and the bathing in the clear cold current of the rushing Ganges. I mingled with the throng of bathing pilgrims daily, in the water, to my great refreshment. On 1st June, the great bathing day, I could compare the crowd to nothing else than bees swarming, and the noise to a prolonged roar of a

[1] It almost seems as if they thought divine truth to be an inverted pyramid, of which the base, spreading upward and outward, receives the whole religious influx, and the apex—the discharge-point—rests upon their particular altar. Outside the pyramid, nothing, save untruth.

storm-blast. The Police, under an European director, were very rough to the poor pilgrims, pushing and knocking them about like a mob of cattle. But so it is everywhere, in whatsoever direction one looks, harshness the rule, gentleness and patience the exception.

On the last morning of my visit I strolled up the paved way leading from the bathing-ghāt towards the mountain, and was greatly shocked at something I saw. Squatting on the pavement was a group of three, an elderly Hindu woman, a young man—apparently her son—and a Brahmin. Between them, some human bones and ashes done up in a dirty cotton cloth. A chaffering, like what I heard once at an Irish fair for a pig, was going on, the angry voices raised, offers and refusals—on the one part, humble faith ; on the other, priestly greed. The issue was as to how much the priestly shark should have for throwing the bones and ashes into the swift-slipping water. A glance at the man's face was enough to fill me with disgust and indignation, and I felt the greatest inclination to pitch him into the river with the bones tied about his neck. This is one of the depths to which the sublime religion of the Rishis has sunk in the hands of the degraded scum who officiate in so many temples, defiling the sanctuary of the gods by their moral effluvia. The more honor to those who keep the faith of their forefathers as, consciously, custodians of a great treasure, and square their lives of usefulness with their religious professions.

Lahore next, where H. H. the late Maharajah of Kashmir had placed his palace—a dilapidated building

—at my disposal, and where a company of soldiers could have been given quarters. The energetic Pandit Gopinath, F.T.S., had arranged all the details of my visit, and kept me busy with crowds of visitors and daily lectures in the several quarters of the city. This was the capital of Runjit Singh, the warrior king of the Sikhs, surnamed the Lion of the North. A great man was he and a great soldier, but not a lovable character—rather a man of iron. Every good work on psychology tells the story of the burial of the Hatha Yogī, Haridas, for six weeks, in a tomb specially built in the Maharajah's garden, his subsequent exhumation and resuscitation, and his dismissal by the king with costly presents. On this occasion, as during my previous visits to Lahore, I searched after elderly men who had been eye-witnesses to the marvel of Yoga, and found one in an old Sikh Sirdar, whose account agreed, in the chief particulars, with those of Dr. Macgregor and Sir Claude Wade. In fact, there can be no question whatever as to the prime fact that this man had, by Yoga, acquired the power of suspending animation to the limit of at least forty days, and could suffer himself to be tied up in a bag and kept all that time in a sepulchre, without the chance of eating, drinking, or even breathing, and with guards keeping watch over it day and night to prevent the possibility of trickery. He was no saint, was Haridas, as I have explained in previous notices of the case, but yet he could do this wonderful thing; and I should be glad if every student of occult science could realise that strictly moral attributes are by no means indispensable for the

psychical phenomena exhibited by spiritual mediums, mesmerisers, hypnotisers, healers of the sick, clairvoyants, prophets of sorts, and other possessors of abnormal faculties which pertain to the astral body and function on the astral plane. Think, for one moment, of the worthless characters of many of these surprise-workers, in our day as at previous epochs, and the truth will be seen. At the same time, the reader must not run off with the idea that *all* disease-curing, clairvoyance, and seership is confined to the lower self ; far from it, for the Adept acquires all the *Siddhis*, and can thus have access to all repositories of knowledge, and work manifold wonders for the good of mankind. But He takes no fees, creates no scandals, does no wrong to a living being ; He is our benefactor, our Teacher, our Elder Brother, our exemplar ; a sacred radiance broods over Him, He is a light of the race.

The outcome of my visit was the formation of a Branch under the name of the Lahore Theosophical Society, and I then went on to Moradabad. Here I found, as District Judge, our old friend Ross Scott, C.S., our fellow-passenger on the ill-fated "Speke Hall," and ever our brave colleague who had stood up for us through good report and evil report, despite the whole force of Anglo-Indian prejudice. On this occasion he most willingly took the chair at my lecture, and spoke most kindly of the movement and of ourselves.

Next on to Bareilly for lectures, receptions, and inspections of our own Sanskrit School and another, both flourishing. While I was here the monsoon

broke and the mercury dropped from 98° to 82°, and life was again bearable. At Bara-Banki, the home of Pandit Purmeshwari Das, there was much interest shown in our work. I saw here a real curiosity in the shape of a dwarf, 32 inches high, perfectly formed, 23 years of age, a clever fellow, and a salaried office-messenger or *chuprassi*.

With the rains came swarms of bugs and all sorts of insects, which had been brought to life by the kindly moisture in the ground. I found this out beyond mistake at Fyzabad, where, the Museum Hall becoming uncomfortably crowded, we adjourned to a lawn outside. A table with two sheltered candles being placed for me, and the audience accommodated with chairs and carpets, I began my (extempore) lecture on "Chitragupta," and managed to go on for a quarter of an hour, but by that time I was surrounded by a swarm of evil-smelling bugs, attracted by the lights, and was forced to stop. It would have amused anyone to have seen me standing there, with my figure lighted up by the candles, going ahead with my discourse as best I could; bugs crawling up the legs of my pyjamas, crawling up the sleeves of my Indian *chapkan*, slipping down my neck, getting into my eyes, ears, nose, and mouth; I, shaking my garments and hunting after them in my neck, stamping my feet, and brushing them out of my hair; and the smell—well, think of that of the potato-bug, that malodorous pest, to touch which is to have one's fingers tainted. That was my predicament at Fyzabad, and one can imagine that it was not conducive to extemporaneous

religious discourse. At last I had to give it up in despair, so, to put as good a face on my discomfiture as possible, I said: "Gentlemen: It is a law of physics that two bodies cannot simultaneously occupy the same space. We have, it seems, intruded upon a meeting of the National Bug Congress. The Delegates from the four quarters are, as you see, crowding me from the four quarters, so I close my speech and move an adjournment." The next evening I lectured inside the building, great open pans of water being placed on the floor, into which the bugs, under some mysterious attraction, fell, and I was able to get through my lecture more or less comfortably. While at Fyzabad I was driven to the beautiful park and bathing-ghāt, at the site where Srī Rama, the Avatār, is said to have made his last appearance on earth, and which possesses, on that account, a character of great sacredness.

All this district was Indian classical ground. From Fyzabad I travelled towards Gorakhpur, crossing the Gogra River from Ayodhya, Rama's ancient capital, by a steam ferry. What would Rama and his Court have thought of that!

Bankipur and Durbhunga followed after Chupra, which was next after Gorakhpur. At Chupra, among my foreign letters I received one from H. P. B. which distressed me much. She had consented to start a new magazine with capital subscribed by London friends of hers, while she was still editor and half proprietor of the *Theosophist*—a most unusual and unbusinesslike proceeding. Besides other causes, among them the persuasion of English friends, a

reason which strongly moved her to this was that Mr. Cooper-Oakley, her own appointee as Managing Editor, had more or less sided with T. Subba Row in a dispute which had sprung up between him and H. P. B. on the question whether the "principles" which go to the make-up of a human being were seven or five in number. Subba Row had replied in our pages to an article of hers on the subject, and her letters to me about it were most bitter and denunciatory of Cooper-Oakley, whom she, without reasonable cause, charged with treachery. It was one of those resistless impulses which carried her away sometimes into extreme measures. She wanted me to take away his editorial authority, and even sent me a foolish document, like a power-of-attorney, empowering me to send him to Coventry, so to say, and not allow any galley-proof to pass to the printer until initialed by myself. Of course, I remonstrated strongly against her thus, without precedent, setting up a rival competing magazine to hurt as much as possible the circulation and influence of our old-established organ, on the title-page of which her name still appeared. But it was useless to protest; she said she was determined to have a magazine in which she could say what she pleased, and in due time *Lucifer* appeared as her personal organ, and I got on as well as I could without her. Meanwhile, a lively interchange of letters went on between us. She was at strife then, more or less, with Mr. Sinnett, and before this was settled, a number of seceders from his London Lodge organised as the Blavatsky Lodge, and met at her house in Lansdowne Road, where her sparkling

personality and vast knowledge of occult things always ensured full meetings.

The Maharajah of Durbhunga, whose guest I was at Bankipore and his own capital, who was a member of our Society and professedly my warm friend, drove me out and spent hours in discussions with me, but on my leaving, neither came to bid me farewell nor sent me a rupee on account of his voluntarily offered yearly subscription towards the Society's expenses, nor even for my travelling expenses—a discourtesy that no Branch, however poor, had ever paid me. I have never said a word about it before, but I believe the cause of his sudden disaffection was his discovery that I would not do a certain act of sorcery for him, one that many Indian Rajas have had tried for them. If I am mistaken, then his behavior after this was pefectly inexplicable.

Jamalpur, a new town built up by the Railway Company, and where it has very extensive machine-shops and a great many houses and cottages for its employés, which it rents to them at fixed cheap rates, was my next objective point. I was enabled to get through a lot of my correspondence here, the office duties of our members giving me the necessary leisure. We celebrated the fourth anniversary of the local Branch, and I, after lecturing twice, proceeded on to Monghyr, where a new Branch was organised. I then came to Bhagalpore, the home of my blind patient, Babu Badrinath Banerji, about whose most strange recoveries under my mesmeric treatment, and relapses into blindness, I have written elsewhere. These relapses were sad enough, yet the enjoyment

of a whole year's eyesight after one day's treatment was not so bad a bargain after all. Badrinath Babu profited by my healing passes, in the restoration of his sight for the third time, and when I left the station was quite able to get about without help and to read the papers of the day.

A gratifying incident occurred after an address of mine at the Taj Naraen College, to the Boys' Moral Society. Besides the Hindu students there were many Muslim ones, so I framed my discourse on "Man and his Duties" so as to make it applicable to the followers of the Prophet as well as to the others. On my resuming my seat a handsome Muslim Maulvi rose, and in a most eloquent discourse thanked me for my references to the moral code of Islam.

Berhampore, seat of an old, active, ever-staunch Branch which has played so noted a part in our early Indian history, gave me a royal welcome. I was the guest of Dr. Ram Das Sen, the Orientalist, so well known in Western lands, and after the usual public and private meetings, I left for Murshedabad, where my friend the Nawab had bidden me to visit him at his Palace. I stopped overnight with him, lectured on "Islam" to a very uncomfortably packed house, took his Dewan into membership, and then returned to Calcutta once more. So ended this long circuit of my ten thousand mile Indian Journey of 1887.

# INDEX


## A

Adept at Pondicherry, 17.
Adepts, Portraits of, 155 *et seq.*
Adoni, 304.
Adyar and H. P. B., 379.
,, Building, Description of, 75.
,, Building Schemes, 324.
,, Library, Inception of, 246.
Aligarh and the phenomenal missive, 30.
Allahabad and the Coulomb affair, 291.
,, in 1887, 428.
,, visited, 25.
American Difficulties, 365.
An Ancient Shrine, 402.
Anantapur, 305.
Animal Fights, 49.
,, Hospital, 421.
"Apport" of Letter, 31.
Arnold, Sir Edwin, 159.
,, ,, Reception in Ceylon, 342.
Artistic Inspiration, 158.
Astrology, 240.
Atmaram Swami, 58.
Aura in Disease, 142.
,, under treatment, 142.
"Auric" Spheres, 28.

## B

Bangalore, 374.
,, Dewan of, 374.
Bankipore, 438.
Banon, Captain A., 289.
Bareilly visited, 29, 434.
Baroda visited, 60, 417.
,, Gaikwar of, 60.
Behram, Dr. Edal, 419.
Bellary, 304.
Benares in 1887, 428.
Berhampore, 439.
Bhaunagar, 408.
*Bhima Grantham*, the genuine, 244.
,, ,, Questions raised by, 245-6.
Bimlipatam visited, 67.
Bishop Bigandet, 209.
Bishop's Blessing, A, 385.
Blind Badrinath Banerji (Case of), 438.
Blindness cured, 18.
Bombay, 21, 295, 408, 419.
Bricks and Mortar, 338.
Brown, Mr. W. T., 19, 36, 327.
Buddhist Catechism translated, 210.
,, Defence Committee, 71, 359.
,, Flag, 352.
,, Mission, Correspondence on, 120 *et seq.*
,, Mission, History of, 112.
,, ,, Progress of, 118.
,, Public Worship, 357 *et seq.*
Bulandshahr, 430.
Burma, Visit to, 200 *et seq.*

C

CAHAGNET, ALPHONSE, and his work, 247.
Caithness, Countess of, 79.
Captain Courmes, 78.
Carnival at Nice, 83-4.
Caste and the T. S., 69.
*Caves and Jungles*, effect in Russia, 71.
Cawnpore, Again, 429.
" Events at, 26-8.
" Lecture at, 290.
Ceylon again visited in 1887, 400.
" Cremation Ceremony, 343 *et seq.*
" Religious differences in, 343 *et seq.*
" visited, 342.
Chakravarti, Mr. G. N., 288.
Change in *Theosophist*, 312.
Charcot, Professor, 153.
Clairvoyance and Police, 83.
Coimbatore Branch organised, 11.
Collapse of T. S. in U.S.A., 386.
Colombo, Work in, 71.
Colour prejudice in India, 279.
Committee of T. S. and Coulomb case, 191.
Convention in Colombo, 353.
" of 1883, 63.
Conversaziones, value of, 139-140.
Cooper-Oakley, Mr., 313.
Coues, Dr. Elliott, 365, 386.
Coulomb Antecedents, 187 *et seq.*
" Conspiracy, 179 *et seq.*
" Scandal, effects of, 196 *et seq.*
Coulombs, Fate of the, 195 *et seq.*
" The, 73.
Cremation *v.* Burial, 348.
Crookes, Mr. (Sir William), 95, 145.
Cuddapah, 386.
Curious accident to picture, 322.
Customs of Kashmir Court, 48.

D

DAMODAR, Astral Visit, 33.
" Disappears, 51, 265 *et seq.*
" Progress of, 26.
" Returns, 54.
Damodar's Diary, 260 *et seq.*
Dangerous Drive, A, 401.
Darjeeling, 254.
Dedication, A, 402.
Defence of Hinduism, 272 *et seq.*
Degenerate Buddhists, 356.
Degraded Priesthood, 432.
Delhi visited, 32.
Difficulties at Adyar, 217 *et seq.*
Dinner at Junior Athenæum, 95.
Discomfited Orientalist, A, 287.
Du Prel, Baron Carl, 170, 171.
Durbhanga, Strange Conduct of Prince of, 438.
*Dwaita Catechism*, 339.

E

EARTHQUAKE Experience, 277.
Eastern Customs, 49.
Economical Touring, 419 *et seq.*
Education, Lecture on, 297.
Epileptic Attack cured, 294.
Evans, Colonel and Mrs., 80.
" Evil Eye," the Explanation of, 146 *et seq.*
Ewen, Mr., Clairvoyance of, 141.
Executive Committee suggested, 226.
Expulsion of official at Jaipur, 59.
Ezekiel, Mr., Kabbalist, 295.

F

FEVER and Native Remedies, 354.
Fire at Madras, 332.
Flammarion, Camille, 80.
Floating Fire Festival at Mylapore, 341.
France, Theosophy in, 325 *et seq.*

Friendly Weather Elementals, 289.
Fyzabad and its "live-stock," 435.

G

Galle, 405.
Ganges, Bathing in the, 431.
Gebhard, Frau, 164, 319.
Germany, Theosophy in, 166.
Ghazipore visited, 25.
Girnar Rock Inscription, 410.
Gooty visited, 304.
Gopinath, Pandit, 57.
Government Service, effect in T. S., 427.
Guyot, Yves, 151.

H

Hackett, Rev. Mr., 292.
Haemmerlé, Madame, 80.
Handwriting Experts, value of, 235 *et seq.*
Hardwar, Convention at, 430.
Haridas, the Hatha Yogī, 433.
Harisinhji, Prince, 384.
Hartmann, Dr. F., appears, 61.
" " takes Buddhist precepts, 64.
Hatha Yoga, Instance of, 24.
Healing a Paralytic, 12.
Healings suspended by order, 21
Hermetic T. S. founded, 94.
Hodgson, Dr., 103.
Hoffmann, Herr von, 168.
Hoshangabad, 423.
H. P. B., Attitude towards, 110-111.
" and Keely, 387.
" at Ostende, 332.
" at Torre del Greco, 308 *et seq.*
" Character sketch, 314-318.
" Culinary ignorance, 11.
" Difficult to work with, 221.
H. P. B. in exile, 311 *et seq.*
" in society, 2.
" Leaves for Europe, 222.
" Letter on *Secret Doctrine*, 367.
" Phenomena by, 10.
" Russian spy myth, 220.
" Serious illness, 205 *et seq.*
" Slanders by Coulombs, 246.
" Speech at Madras, 186.
" Sphere of work described, 11.
" S. P. R. Report, 101.
" Story of childhood, 9.
" Successors appointed, 380.
Hübbe-Schleiden, Dr., 172, 319.
Hyderabad, 18 *et seq.*, 299.
Hypnotic Cures, 87.
Hypnotism, Schools of, 153 *et seq.*

I

Idols, how to make, 251.
Indian Art and European Taste ! 411.
Indian Papers on the Conspiracy, 184 *et seq.*
Infallibility in the T. S., 228 *et seq.*
Ingratitude of the Healed, 13.
" of T. S. Members, 219.
Inspiration, Sources and Method of, 368 *et seq.*
Invitation from King Thebaw, 22.
Islam, Lecture on, 285.

J

Jamalpur visited, 438.
Jammu visited, 44.
Jewish Joke, A, 296.
Joke by the P. T. S., 339.
Jubbulpore revisited, 292, 423.
" School for Princes, 23.

Judge, W. Q., on Astrology, 243.
Juggling Skill, 412.

K

Kandy and Processions, 403.
Kapurthala, Visit to, 58.
Karma, Working of, 362 *et seq.*
Karur, 324.
Kashmir, Maharajah of, 43, 47.
" " Munificence to T. S., 57.
Keely and the " S. D.," 387.
Kingsford, Anna, 92 *et seq.*
King Thebaw's Invitation, 200, 212.

L

Lahore, Events at, 35 *et seq.*
" again, 432.
Leadbeater, Mr. C. W., in Ceylon, 356.
Lecture to Lepers, 404.
Lectures in Calcutta, 271.
Letter from the Master K. H., 38.
" to Dr. Hübbe-Schleiden, 167.
Levi, Eliphas, 164.
Library at Adyar, in embryo, 328.
" Building begun, 336.
" opening, 389 *et seq.*
" progresses, 373, 383.
Limbdi visited, 414.
Lionising in London, 97.
Literary Activity, 384.
London Lodge, T. S., 90.
*Lucifer* founded by H. P. B., 436-7.
Lucknow " a sink," 284.
" visited, 29.

M

Madhavdas, Swami, 292.
Madras T. S. Anniversary, 17.
Magnetism of Audiences, 290.
Maharajah of Durbhanga, 281.
Maji of Benares, 271.
" " Death of, 280.
" " Visit to, 280.
Maji's Revelations to Damodar, 262.
*Man, a Fragment of Forgotten History*, 233.
Marble Rocks, The, 23.
Master K. H. appears at Lahore, 36.
Master's Letter, A, 91.
Master's Message, A, 365.
Max, Gabriel, 171.
Max Müller, Prof., misstatement by, 176.
Medankara, Buddhist Bhikku, 388.
Medical Certificate, A, 319.
Megittuwatte, 406.
Mesmeric Experiments, 80.
" " in Burma, 204.
" " More, 211, 215.
Missionary, A Fair-minded, 292.
" Clique, A, 293.
Model Reception, A, 19.
Mohini and the Æsthetic Lady, 95.
Monkeys at Fyzabad, 282.
Moradabad, 434.
Morgan, General, and Coulombs, 226.
Multiple Membership disallowed, 96.
Mysterious Telegraph Peon, 52.
Mystery Play, A, 412.

N

" Nadigranthams," 243.
Nagpur, 294, 422.
Narainswamy Naidu, 294, 422.
Narayani Sect, 410.
Nerbudda River, 423.
Nuddea, Prince of, 257.

O

*OCCULT WORLD* published, 97.
Official Address, Dec. 1885, 328.
" Correspondence, 3[illegible] *seq.*

Official Recognition, 3 *et seq.*
Ootacamund, 3.
Ooty, Stay at, 2.
Opening of the Library, 389.
Oriental Institute to come, 398.

**P**

PALANQUIN Journey, 270.
Pali and Sanskrit, 388.
Palm Grove by night, 355.
Paris visited, 85.
Phenomena and Science, 31.
Phenomenal Letters, 90, 167, 176.
" Memory, 300 *et seq.*
" Rupees, 63.
Phenomenon at the Gebhards', 176.
Photographic Forgery, A, 361.
Pomar, Duchesse de, Visit to, 79.
Pondicherry, 14.
" An Adept at, 17.
" Amusing Reception at, 14.
" Lecture in French at, 15 *et seq.*
Poona, 20, 21, 295, 419.
*Posthumous Humanity*, 364.
Praed, Mrs. Campbell, 139.
" " " *Affinities*, 158.
Prevision, a case of, 215.
Prophecies, New and Old, 237 *et seq.*
Psychical Research Society's Report, 103 *et seq.*
Psychic Conditions in lecturing, 28.
Psychological Phenomenon explained, 334.

**R**

RAJPUT Rulers, 414 *et seq.*
Rama's Capital, 436.
Rangoon, 200 *et seq.*
Reflections on the Master's Visit, 39 *et seq.*
Reminiscence of the War Department, 351.
Reputation cheaply made, 286.
Retirement proposed and rejected, 329-31.
Return to India, 183.
Robert the Mesmerist, 80.
" " " Story of, 82.
Row, Sir T. Madhava, 377.

**S**

SANSKRIT and Pali, 388.
" School proposed, 25.
Sarat Babu and Tibet, 254 *et seq.*
Schmiechen's Paintings, 156.
Schroeder, Herr, Magnetiser, 169.
Scott, Judge Ross, 434.
Scottish T. S. founded, 160.
*Secret Doctrine, The*
" " " Conditions of production, 371-72.
" " " MS. of, 386.
" " " Plan of, 199.
" " " Subba Row's opinion of, 386.
" " " in progress, 318.
Secunderabad, 303.
Seeds sown for C. H. College, 324.
Sen, Dr. Ram Das, 439.
Seven, the Mystic, 381.
Shroff, Mr. K. M., 421.
Shway Dagōn described, 201 *et seq.*
Sibylline Books, 242.
*Siddhis*, higher and lower, 434.
Snake-stone tested, 304.
Solovioff, 178, 308.
Some Statistics of Work, 336.
Spedalieri, Baron, 78.
S. P. R. Examination, 100.
" Methods, 30.
" Report, 101.
Stark, Mr., Experiments with, 43.

Sturdy, Mr. E. T., 409.
Subba Row and H. P. B., 386.
" " at Headquarters, 382.
" " Lectures on the Gītā, 388.
Subba Row Medal Fund, The, 64.
" " on Astrology, 243.
" " Opinion of "S. D.," 386.
Sumangala, Visit to, 403.
Surat, 418.

T

TEJ NARAIN and his College, 254.
The T. S. and "Reforms," 70.
Theosophical Pollen Grains, 367.
Theosophische Gesellschaft Germania, 166.
Theosophy and Presbyterianism, 161.
Thought Currents, 144.
" Forms, 149.
" Transference, 139 *et seq.*
Thugs, 423 *et seq.*
Tookaram Tatya, 295.
Tour for Propaganda, 248 *et seq.*
" in Northern India, 253.
Trials of 1885, 306.

V

VEGETARIAN Cookery, 1.
" Diet, 2.
" " temporarily abandoned, 429.
Verification of Phenomena, 34.
Voyage to Europe, 76.

W

WACHTMEISTER, COUNTESS, 319.
Wagner and Buddhism, 169.
Weber, Baron von, 328.
Westernised Hindus, 257.

Z

ZOUAVE JACOB, 86.
Zschokke, Story of, 67.

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